The Bodily Incorruptibility of Holy Men and Women in Pre-Modern Japan and Europe

博士論文

The Bodily Incorruptibility of Holy Men and Women in Pre-Modern Japan and Europe

腐敗せざる遺体－前近代日本と欧州における聖人の遺体をめぐって

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題目『The Bodily Incorruptibility of Holy Men and Women in Pre-Modern Japan and Europe』

「腐敗せざる遺体ー前近代日本と欧州における聖人の遺体をめぐって」

目次の日本語訳

本研究の問題関心は、日本列島をフィールドとして、そこで作成された聖人伝の思想内容を分析するとともに、それをヨーロッパの聖人信仰と比較研究することである。すなわち、日本仏教のいくつかの宗教思潮について、各時代と文化圏の資料を分析するものであり、本質的に比較研究である。主な論点は、弘法大師入定説と、そこに影響を与えたと考えられる浄土教の思想およびその聖人伝に関する問題、さらに西ヨーロッパと日本においてともに聖なる遺体が腐敗しないとされていることから生じる問題について追求することである。先行研究において、日本とヨーロッパにおけるミイラの思想史に関する理論的な考察は十分であるとは言い難く、したがって本論は聖なる人のミイラ、またはその比較研究をめぐる「理論」を示す試みである。

本研究では、日本において遺体が腐敗しないことから生じる特別な聖人観とその遺体の役割が、西ヨーロッパの聖人の場合にも同様に見られることを議論する。そのことから、遺体が腐敗しないことの一般的な宗教的意義についても考察する。その際、比較文化論的な視点に立脚しつつ、以上の問題を探求することによって、前近代思想における「浄と不浄」、「あの世とこの世」等の死生観に関わる重要な研究の一助となることを目指したい。

序章では問題の所在を示し、先行研究を概観する。第一章（i）の目的は、コンストラクティヴィズムが提供する学際的文脈の中で、比較研究の妥当性を検証することにある。宗教学におけるこれまでの比較研究の失敗と再考の歴史を踏まえながら、比較研究のあり方を批判的に検討する。ここでは特に、宗教学者のジョナサン・Z・スミス氏の方法論に着目し、比較研究のより広範な可能性について論ずる。コンストラクティヴィズムにおける規範変容の理論に焦点を当て、国際関係論と社会科学における比較研究の適応可能な事例を提供する。

第一章（ii）では、ミイラ化した聖なる人に関する文化史的な文脈において有

用な「受容理論」を紹介する。本論では、前近代日本およびその他の資料を参考にしながら、「混合的内容」（syncretic content）という概念と「ミメティック理論」（mimetic theory）の妥当性について議論する。

第二章は日本における聖なる人の遺体が腐敗しないことのパラダイムである弘法大師入定説伝説を再考する。空海が永遠に高野山の奥の院に留まることを語る弘法大師入定説伝説は、従来密教の即身成仏の思想、あるいは弥勒下生信仰との関わりにおいて解釈されてきた。それに対し本章は、この問題に関する近年の研究を踏まえ、この伝説が高野山復興運動を背景として、一〇・一一世紀の浄土教的聖人伝＝往生伝の思想と密接な関わりをもち、その影響を受けて成立したものであることを、広範な文脈のなかで論証しようとするものである。さらに、それ以降の弘法大師入定説の成立と発展を、同時代のより広範な思想的文脈の中に位置づけることを試みる。すなわち本稿は、弘法大師入定説における即身仏の意義や、腐敗せざる聖なる遺体に関する筆者の研究の一環を成すものであり、先の研究の結論をさらに発展させることを目的とするものである。

この第二章は『日本霊異記』と弘法大師入定説以前における腐敗せざる遺体をめぐる思想の考察（i）で始まる。日本における遺体の状態に死後の運命が表されているという概念は、古代後期の資料に限られたものではない。本節では、『日本霊異記』が表している、古代における体に現れる死後の状態の印を描写する資料を紹介する。第二章（ii）は、弘法大師入定説の関連資料の分析と比較考察に主眼を置きつつ、往生伝文学が弘法大師入定説に与えた影響やその思想史的背景などについて考察したものである。第二章（iii）では、一一世紀後半から十二世紀前半の時期に、弘法大師入定説が神仙譚に類似する形式で描写され、説話集などに収録されたが、弘法大師入定説を真言宗における即身成仏思想の枠の中で理解しようとする通説の影響で、その意義はいまだ十分に注目されていな

いことを論じる。第三章（i）は、ヨーロッパの聖人伝（*vitae*）における *corpora incorrupta*（腐敗せざる肉体）の観念を、広い文化史の文脈の中に位置づけようとする試みである。

ヨーロッパ中世においては、遺体の肉が完全に腐敗して骸骨になるまでの間は、遺体は危険で不安定な存在だと捉えられていた。生きている人々が、罪深い人物の遺体により損なわれる恐れがあった。悪人の遺体が危険であるのとは逆に、聖人の遺体は非常に縁起がいいものと見なされていた。聖人の *corpora incorrupta* は、もっとも聖なる肉を有する存在と信じられた。しかし、その肉と聖人の *ratio*（理性的精神）の関係が密接であったがために、逆に *corpora incorrupta* の *anima*（魂）と *caro*(肉)をめぐる教義的説明は不明確なものにならざるをえなかった。宗教改革へと向かうヨーロッパにおいては、その不明瞭さが *corpora incorrupta* の一つの魅力的な側面であったが、より詳しく検討すると、神聖性の印として説教的な意義を持っていた古代の *corpora incorrupta* は、中世的身体論によってより理論的に解釈されるようになっていたことがわかる。

第三章（ii）では西ヨーロッパにおける聖人と日本における往生人を比較考察する。「浄と不浄」、「あの世とこの世」というテーマに主眼を置き、特に『往生伝』と『黄金伝説』の資料を取り上げる。その資料における聖なる死の思想的文脈と意義について論じ、さらにその比較研究へのアプローチを紹介する。日本に現存している「即身仏」の中で最も古いものと言える弘智法印資料を展望的に、近世日本における腐敗せざる遺体を考察する。即身仏に関する文献資料は非常に乏しいが、弘智法印の場合には、先行研究でほとんど注目されてこなかった『弘知法印御伝記』という江戸期の人気を集めた浄瑠璃等がある。本節は近世ヨーロッパの世俗化している社会との比較を含めた、当該資料をめぐる一考察である。

Jonathan Paul Morris Doctoral Thesis:

The Bodily Incorruptibility of Holy Men and Women in Pre-Modern Japan and Europe

Contents:

Summary

This thesis offers a discussion of the role of saints and physical incorruption as a sign of holiness. With a particular focus on materials relating to Kūkai (空海 d.835ce), the central figure of Japanese Buddhist esoteric thought; this study explores the ways in which holy men and women have been thought to continue to influence this world after their deaths, particularly in leading people to salvation. Using comparative methods and materials from both Japan and Europe, this study looks at the cosmological status of "saints" as beings with both this-worldly and other-worldly natures. Key themes for that study include the immanence and mediacy of holy men and women which facilitates interaction with them after their death, perhaps at their grave site, and the related notion of the further sanctification of a holy place or the salvation of a group of those believers whose remains are laid to rest there through the presence of a holy person's remains. The development of the legend of the *nyūjō* (入定-the entering into of ongoing meditative stillness) of Kūkai provides an archetypal image recreated in the *sokushinbutsu* (即身仏), self-mummified "buddhas in this very body", of the Tohoku region of Japan. The intellectual development of this image is explored not only as a collection of textual materials, but is also interpreted in theoretical terms as an archetypal image in itself.

There has been in recent years a renewed interest in the role of the late ancient/early medieval holy man or woman, with a number of studies examining the qualities of holy men and women found in materials such as the Buddhist hagiographic genres *Kōsōden* (高僧伝, which narrates the lives of senior monks) and *Ōjōden* (往生伝, which narrates the lives of those who achieved Pure Land rebirth). The cosmological and intellectual historical questions concerning the ways in which holy men and women have continued to be of influence after their deaths has received relatively less attention. This study,

focusing on late ancient/early medieval material, particularly the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai on Mt. Kōya (the *kōbōdaishinyūjōsetsu* 弘法大師入定説) and the texts, individuals and practices it is directly related to is an attempt to introduce the complexity of the role of holy people within the worldview of that period, and models which will serve to clarify the typical patterns which we may identify as key approaches to the understanding of the significance of holy men and women.

Previous research on this topic has centered on the *sokushinbutsu*, self-mummified "buddhas in this very body" closely associated with Shugendo (*Shugendō* 修験道), the Shingon (真言) sect and the Dewasanzan (出羽三山) holy mountains of Japan's Tohoku region. This study has generally taken an Intellectual Historical rather than a Religious Studies approach, tracing the thought and practice underlying the *sokushinbutsu* phenomenon to its origins in Heian period Buddhist thought and hagiographic genres. The breadth of this project is a factor of the unusual and thus very highly specific contexts of the subject matter. In order to put these anomalous and in some ways challenging phenomena in intellectual historical perspective, it has been necessary to take a broad and inclusive approach, in addition to detailed qualitative and higher critical analysis of texts. My more nuanced and less sectarian understanding of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai, which highlights the influence of Pure Land thought on that legend, has not been fully presented to Anglophone scholarship. The analysis in this project will provide a reference for those working on similar themes in related areas, such as the study of mummification in Tibetan, Chinese, Thai and Taiwanese Buddhism.

The introductory part of the thesis introduces the content in general and provides an overview of previous research on the topic of the worship of mummified holy men and women. The purpose of the project-to establish this relatively under-studied theme in

Japanese Religious Studies in an accurate, full and relevant cultural context-is set out here. With reference to key examples of holy men and women (other than those which are the focus of later sections) whose preserved and mummified bodies have been the focus of veneration, I give an overview of the various aspects of this phenomenon and the key questions left unanswered in previous research which will be taken up in later sections.

The first chapter of the thesis examines various theoretical issues relating to the study of the mummies of holy men and women. This is an attempt to address the topic in a full and interdisciplinary manner. It based on an understanding of the mummies of holy men and women as primarily visual objects. As such, Intellectual Historical studies on the mummies of holy men and women based on analysis of relevant texts face the theoretical problem of accounting for which texts the researcher decides are relevant and which are not. In seeking to draw inferences regarding the influences on the intellectual genealogy of mummification and deliberate self-mummification, it is typically the case that researchers give absolute priority to purely doctrinal concerns. I argue that the visual impact of prior examples, either as image objects or as images fixed in the *imaginaire*, is of an equal order of importance to doctrinal analyses. If we are to argue that the subject of this study is, by nature, a combination of visual, ideological and cultural influences, what theoretical framework can bring together these various aspects of the phenomenon? Theoretical content has been severely, if not entirely, lacking in previous research on mummified holy men and women save for certain considerations of the economic and institutional concerns underlying the practice of mummification. Though there has recently been a theoretical contribution to the understanding of the sacred body within Shugendo, there is still a need to make Kūkai and the *sokushinbutsu* mummies or European mummies of saints things observed, and not things pre-defined by what we

know of the religious sects to which these individuals belonged. To achieve the purpose of setting this phenomenon in its proper cultural contexts, it is necessary to take a broad and inclusive theoretical approach which serves to explain the various ways in which meaning has been attributed to the mummies. As primarily visual objects, theoretical questions of image and identity are of great importance to an understanding of mummified holy men and women. The ways in which salvation was demonstrated by physical purity and physical qualities in pre-modern cultural contexts, along with the ways in which these holy people developed a social role are key targets for the application of theory in this project. Using a constructivist and extremely inclusive theory set, my theoretical approach offers alternatives to closure while identifying key constants in the development of this phenomenon. The theoretical basis for the study of mummified holy people is a key part of this doctoral thesis. The first section of the first chapter deals with the problems of comparative approaches and discusses the applicability of a constructivist theoretical framework. The second section deals with the mummy as image, applying aspects of mimetic theory and reception theory to address the questions of image and identity inherent in the mummified image. The mummy is, as an image, highly ambivalent in terms of representation and identity with the mummified individual. This thesis addresses the concept of the cultural "frame" applied to the mummy as an image that communicates its identity with the mummified individual and the more abstract religious truths it embodies. This theoretical approach allows for a considerable reappraisal of materials expressing the singular importance of traditions relating to the incorruptibility of Kōbō Daishi Kūkai.

The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai (the *Kōbōdaishi nyūjōsetsu* 弘法大師入定説), involving the discovery of his warm and incorrupt body, is important to the

development of Kōbō Daishi related beliefs and practices. This chapter, the most important in the project, offers a reassessment of the source materials for this legend from a history of ideas perspective. This full reconsideration of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai 空海 (774-835) on Mt. Kōya and the texts, individuals and practices to which it is directly related forms part of an attempt to introduce the complexity of the role of superhumanly holy people (*seijin* 聖人) within the worldview of that period. However, it has had more specific importance within the field of Japanese Buddhism. Previous research on Kūkai has been based around his role as founder of the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism, and has tended to ignore the influence of concepts which lie outside the modern intellectual boundaries of the thought characteristic of the Shingon sect. My work on this fundamentally important area in the study of the mummification of holy men and women in Japan, summarized in two major papers and laid out in full in the thesis itself, has demonstrated the influence of concepts and themes typical of and originating in Pure Land thought and the legends of the Buddhist and Taoist immortals. The result of this study was the demonstration through textual analysis that the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai may only be properly understood within the context of the significant religious trends of that time, and the demonstration of the influence of those trends within the contemporary Shingon tradition. Kūkai is a central figure of Japanese religiosity, and the legend of his eternal meditation is central to all of its key themes. As such, a detailed reconsideration of its intellectual historical structures represents a timely and significant contribution to the field.

The first section of the second chapter acknowledges that hortatory hagiographic works involving decay and non-decay around the time of death and after death existed in Japanese Buddhism before Kūkai and before the legend of his eternal meditation emerged

in the 10th century. That context of holy and unholy death expressed in terms of decay or lack thereof may be found in the *Nihon Ryōiki* 日本霊異記, a work representing an earlier stage of Japanese Buddhist cosmology and soteriology than that attributable to the 10th century. It is also an early prior example of such content in a "syncretistic" or "theoretically broad" context. With reference to the *Tenjiku ōjōki* 天竺往生記, we may also conclude that within the concept of Pure Land salvation demonstrated and represented in a this-worldly body existed in Japan even at the time at which Kūkai himself was alive.

The second section of the second chapter seeks to demonstrate that this legend, first found in material written well over a century after Kūkai's death in 835ce, draws heavily on the key ideas and form of Pure Land hagiography typical of the late 10th and 11th centuries. The *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* (金剛峰寺建立修行縁起 968c.e.) has been recognised as the earliest text containing the legend of the incorruptibility of Kūkai. This text and its content provided the basis for later material on the legend in which others visit the apparently lifelike Kūkai at the Mt. Kōya *Okunoin* (奥の院). Similarities between aspects of this text and texts by related authors such as Ōe no Masafusa (大江匡房) have been pointed out previously; but a more general comparison of the Ōjōden accounts of *zuisō* (瑞相, miraculous signs that rebirth in the Pure Land has been achieved, including light, music, fragrances and bodily incorruption) in various forms of post mortem preservation and key Kūkai texts has not yet been attempted. This aspect of the project is an attempt to provide that general comparison and thereby demonstrate the connection between the two.

The third section of chapter two considers the influence of legends of Buddhist and Taoist immortals on the reception of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. Given

the more dualistic understanding of this world and the other world which had taken hold at least by the 11th century, these materials presented alone would represent little more than a footnote in the intellectual history of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and the "*sokushinbutsu*" mummies which are a direct result of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai's influence. However, the inclusion of concepts of the saintly immortal within Buddhist hagiography, from the *Ryōiki* onward, persists as a theme throughout the Heian period and can be found in later materials such as the *Konjaku Monogatarishū* (今昔物語集). Its understanding within Buddhist works, as we shall see, sometimes smooth and syncretic and at other times explicitly controversial, is also of great significance to a full understanding of salvation in the saintly body in Heian hagiography. Understanding the degree of interchange between the various traditions is itself an aid to understanding the reasons for the use of a Pure Land form to express the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai.

The previous section of the chapter introduced an argument that the form and content of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai of the 10th and early 11th centuries reflects the influence of Pure Land hagiography typified in the Heian Ōjōden. This section builds on that assertion by providing a broader conceptual context for this phenomenon, bringing in materials prior to and following the 10th and early 11th centuries. The thread of expressing sacredness or lack thereof in the body runs from before the point at which the legend of the incorruption of Kūkai first develops into the legend of the eternal bodily presence of Kūkai (*Kōbōdaishi ryūshin setsu* 弘法大師留身説) which emerged later in the 11th century. This thread of bodily salvation and the related issue of a background in Buddhist hagiographic works of crossover with portrayals of Taoist style immortals are the two main foci of this section.

The third chapter introduces cross-cultural comparative aspects of this research, expanding further on the broader issues and theoretical concepts relevant to the topic. These include questions relating to the location of the sacred mummy within a cultural framework of concepts of rich and poor, cosmology and purity. This chapter builds on a paper on the European tradition of the bodily incorruption and deliberate mummification of saints published in the Religious Studies and Indology journal *Ronshū*. This chapter introduces the cultural context and intellectual history of *corpora incorrupta* in medieval, particularly late medieval Western Europe. Seen in the light of a growing body of scholarship on religion and the senses in the middle ages, the light, fine perfumes, beauty and general splendor attributed to the *corpora incorrupta* it is clear that the pre-modern context of the *corpora* made no final distinction between spiritual and material values. This chapter goes on to re-apply the observations made of the western mummified saints to achieve what Jonathan Smith has termed a "redescription of the exempla"-the *sokushinbutsu* and other cases of corporeal incorruption in Japan.

Chapter 3 section 1 introduces the cultural context and intellectual history of *corpora incorrupta* in medieval, particularly late medieval Western Europe. What was the significance and appeal of these "whole body relics" in a time which was the heyday for the deliberate separation and distribution of the relics of saints? Seen in the light of a growing body of scholarship on religion and the senses in the middle ages, the light, fine perfumes, beauty and general splendor attributed to the *corpora incorrupta* it is clear that the pre-modern context of the *corpora* made no final distinction between spiritual and material values. The theorist Mark Jenner has suggested that we should be historicizing "bodies" rather than "the body". This goes to the heart of the intellectual historical background of the *corpora incorrupta*, within which the continued presence of the flesh

is associated with the continued presence of the living person. The continued presence of the flesh in this world of corruption is made possible by the purity of the saints ("bodies") and their control over the body. Here the general principles of medieval biology (theories of "the body") meet the *vitae* of saints who, in the medieval period, were more personal than ever before. The later part of this section re-applies the observations made of the western mummified saints to achieve a "redescription of the exempla"-the *sokushinbutsu* and other cases of corporeal incorruption in Japan.

The section on the worship of the bodily remains of saints is a key achievement of this doctoral project, and has been summarized in a paper published in a leading Religious Studies journal. This section, on the Christian doctrine that sacred relics do not decay, demonstrates that the purpose of this aspect of the worship of saints changed greatly over time. The ancient purpose was a demonstration of the reality of the doctrine of resurrection. The medieval understanding of the doctrine was part of a more complex view of the human body, in which spiritual purity would lead to bodily health and preservation, while spiritual impurity would lead to bodily decay. Tracing the doctrine from its Biblical roots to its eventual decline in secular modernity, this section is highly original and of considerable significance to academic understanding of the central dogma of Christianity (resurrection). It applies the insights of a growing body of scholarship on religion and the senses in the Middle Ages and demonstrated that the light, fine perfumes, beauty and general splendor attributed to the bodily relics illustrates that within the pre-modern context of the relics no final distinction was made between spiritual and material values. This is the main basis for comparison between concepts of bodily relics in Japan and Europe. The *Legenda Aurea* and English materials have been particular focuses for study. This section also introduces the intellectual historical context of the extant

sokushinbutsu concerning whom the greatest amount of written source material remains- Kōchi Hōin (弘智法印). There is very little extant material concerning Testumonkai (鉄門海), the best known of the *sokushinbutsu*. In contrast, the materials relating to Kōchi Hōin, the oldest extant *sokushinbutsu* mummy, are relatively rich and varied. In addition to *tera engi* (寺縁起, legends pertaining to the origins and history of a particular temple) materials, of which several declensions remain extant, there is an early Edo period *jōruri* (浄瑠璃, a Buddhist influenced puppet drama) play (*Kōchi Hōin Odenki* 弘知法印御伝記,1685) brought to Europe by Kaempfer and a late Edo period *kana zōshi* (仮名草子, a popular work written mainly in kana) storybook (from the Kanō archive) amongst other material. Previous research has not discussed these materials. As they are the only major documentary materials concerning the *sokushinbutsu*, an analysis of their content offers a substantial improvement on the current state of research on the *sokushinbutsu*. In addition to a narratology based discussion, the juxtaposition of the Shingon and Shugendo based aspects of *sokushinbutsu* practices discussed in previous research and the themes, use of terms and entertainment value found in these materials typical of the Edo context lead one to a significant reappraisal of the image of *sokushinbutsu* within Japanese religious history. I present materials on the worship of the mummies of Buddhist monks which has not yet been the focus of full academic study, such as the *Kōchi Hōin Odenki*.

The purpose of the project is to contribute to the worship of bodily relics in Japan and Europe an accurate, full and relevant cultural context. A key aim of the comparative element is to develop a theoretical vocabulary for discussion of pre-modern, particularly medieval views of the pure and impure body. This extends to the cosmology of pure land and defiled land, heaven and the world, representing a significant contribution to the growing body of research and growing interest in the concept known as “the global

middle ages". By exploring the religious and cosmological background to conceptual understandings of "global issues" such as "rich and poor" and "pure and impure", we may gain new insights into the pre-modern societies and their impact on the present. This work has the potential to inform new approaches even outside its key focus areas of Japan and Europe. My research is engaged with the production of a new and more valid, international and interdisciplinary critical vocabulary for the analysis of the concept of the "medieval". Over the long term, the greatest impact of this project may be in terms of its contribution to our understanding of the cultural-historical meaning of commonly used periodization terms. The term "middle ages" is used to refer to periods within a certain timeframe in Japanese and European histories. Certain elements of medieval culture, such as the development of powerful religious, kingly, military and feudal institutions are to varying extents common features of a "global middle ages".

General Introduction

For a general survey of materials relating to the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and other key materials relating to the topic of the whole body relics of holy men and women in Japan and Europe, please refer to my master's thesis on this subject[1]. It is necessary, however, to introduce some of the key previous research here. Among the major religions only Buddhism, Eastern Orthodoxy and Catholicism accept the veneration of relics as part of their practice. It is absent from mainstream Hinduism, Judaism and Protestantism, and though a cult of saints and relics does exist in Islam, orthodox interpreters have generally rejected it. In both Buddhism and Catholicism, there is the veneration of fragmentary body relics. There are cases where the relic is a mummy – a relatively complete, un-decayed body.

The relic cult has been a widespread practice in the devotional life of Buddhists and Catholics from soon after the founding of the religions until our time. After the 9th century it became customary to divide the bodies of Christian saints and a massive and widespread trade with all sorts of relics began that continued throughout the middle ages[2]. There also was a tradition that considered the *corpus integrum/corpus incorruptus* the "whole, undecayed body" to be the form most desirable for a relic. Early Christian writers often mention that the body of the saint was found undecayed before it was transferred to a church. Wholeness, the absence of decay, was seen as miraculous proof of the purity of the saints. The Christian relic cult evolved out of the veneration of martyrs in the 2nd century c.e.. Martyrdom was open to both men and women. Catholic mummies therefore were obtained from both sexes, while Buddhist relics are derived exclusively from male

[1] Morris, Jonathan Paul *Fuhai Shinai Nikutai- Miira ni miru Seijin Sūhai* 腐敗しない肉体―ミイラに見る聖人崇拝, Tohoku University, 2010

[2] See Angenendt (1991) and (1992) for the history of whole-body relics in early Christianity; and Cruz (1977) for hagiographies of 102 Christian whole-body relics in Europe.

corpses.

We may observe many similarities between of the cults of saints, their mummies and their relics, in both the Buddhist and Christian cultural spheres. However, there are major differences. The nature of Christian saintly faith and the power it is believed to confer, which differs to that of the Buddhist saint whose power can generally to be understood as more attained than given.

Incorruption has been recognized as a symbol of holiness from ancient times even up until the present. Perhaps the most recent major event in the worship of incorruptible bodies of dead saints has been the public display of the corpse of St. Francis Xavier in Goa, which attracted many thousands of pilgrims[3]. Modern politics, art and literature have taken up the theme. García Márquez explores the concept in his disturbing novel in which a man carries his daughter's corpse around in a suitcase urging that she be beatified on the grounds of her growing hair and intact features[4]. Sculptures showing the inventio, discovery, of the incorrupt bodies of saints (such as that of the Notre Dame de Amiens Cathedral arch 1230s) often depict the saint rising from the tomb; thus conflating images of resurrection and discovery of incorruption. This is a similar context to the discovery of incorruption of remains within the Amida tradition, in which it was an auspicious sign (*zuisō* 瑞相) of rebirth in the Pure Land (*ōjō* 往生). For the *sokushinbutsu* the incorruptibility of the corpse was a sign that they had become a Buddha in this very body. This is also comparable to the Christian incorruptibles, whose bodies seemed to have partaken in the Kingdom of God. The contextual boundaries on the theme are hard to set. To do so would be an artificial imposition on the subject matter.

[3] 'Pilgrims flock to Goa to see Saint Francis Xavier remains' BBC News website, accessed November 19th 2014 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-30160195

[4] García Márquez, G 'Of Love and Other Demons' Knopf, New York, 1995

The Christian notion of sainthood developed in many ways from those who faced martyrdom in early persecutions. The "martyr" in Early Christianity was a "witness" who in the face of persecution was capable of confessing the faith. This term was not applied only to those upon whom a death sentence was actually carried out, but also to those who escaped this penalty. The ability to be tried and tortured but not renounce the faith was seen as a miracle. There is a relationship in many traditions between blood and the holy, religious perfection and facing death or mortification.

> "the martyrs, precisely because they had died as human beings, enjoyed close intimacy with God. Their intimacy with God was the *sine qua non* of their ability to intercede for and so to protect their fellow mortals. The martyr was the friend of God."[5]

The cult surrounding saints and relics that was at the centre of popular Catholicism during the Middle Ages was diminished greatly through the impact of reformation and enlightenment. In both traditions popular relics cults have sometimes been criticized as superstitious. The veneration of relics, however, is still a distinctive part of Catholicism today. As late as 1952 the church issued certificates for relics.

In the Buddhist world the relic cult was begun with the relics of Shakyamuni enshrined in the stūpa. Later, in Chinese and Chinese influenced Buddhism, however, the retrieval of hard, shining *shelizi* 舍利子 (*śarīra*) from the bone of high-ranking masters after their cremation became customary. Mummified monks can be found in almost all Buddhist cultures, wherever there are exceptions to the rule that the remains of monks and nuns are

[5] Brown, P 'The Cult of the Saints-Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity' The University of Chicago Press 1981 p6

to be cremated. It is clearly a pan-Buddhist phenomenon. Gilded whole-body relics exist in China, Taiwan and Vietnam; ungilded mummies are found in Japan, Tibet, Korea, Mongolia, Thailand and Vietnam.

All over the world where relics or worship at tombs is involved local communities have usually been keen to benefit economically. Oedipus at Colonus and St Francis were under pressure to die in a certain place to make it rich. Hori points out that attracting pilgrims to Dewasanzan (出羽三山) was of vital economic importance[6]. Let us look more specifically at some of the main points discussed in previous research.

The first "independently" recorded *sokushinbutsu* in Japan was actually a Tendai monk called Zōga 増賀 (917-1003) who achieved "self-mummification" at Tōnomine 多武峯 in Yamato 大和, near Nara. Faure states that the *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釈書 explains that the method for Zōga's mummification, being placed in an earthenware pot for 3 years, was introduced from China[7]. Hori reports a Kōyasan *mokujiki* practitioner being described as a possible *sokushinbutsu* in the '*Gyokuyō*' (1184)[8]. The southernmost extant *sokushinbutsu* appear to be Myōshin 妙心 (d. 1817[9]) at Yokokuradera 横蔵寺 in the Ibigawa region of southern Gifu prefecture and Dansei 弾誓 in Ōhara 大原 (d.1613) near Kyoto. There are also those who attempted to become *sokushinbutsu* and whose tombs have not been opened in search of a mummy. I visited Kinryūji 金龍寺 in Kanbayashi 上林 where the Shingon monk Zōben 増弁 (d.1734) was inspired to help his suffering community by becoming a *sokushinbutsu* surely because this was the height

[6] Hori, I 'Self-Mummified Buddhas in Japan: An Aspect of the *Shugen-Dō* Sect' in 'History of Religions' 1/2 1962 p240ff
[7] Faure, B 'The Rhetoric of Immediacy' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 p160
[8] Hori, I 'Self-Mummified Buddhas in Japan: An Aspect of the *Shugen-Dou* Sect' in 'History of Religions' 1/2 1962 p240
[9] This mummy is referred to as *shaributsu* 舎利仏, śarīra-buddha http://www.town.ibigawa.gifu.jp/kankoujyouhou/history/yokokuraji.html

of Yudonosan's fame, and also to commemorate the 900th anniversary of Kūkai's entrance into *nyūjo* (immovable Samadhi). At Kenninji 建仁寺 there is a mausoleum supposedly containing the remains of Yōsai. There is an "animate icon" of him placed there in 1744 along with some statues of Shoguns to commemorate the 500th anniversary of his death. Faure introduces this case as a rare example of a Zen mummy in Japan, a common feature of Chinese *Ch'an*. He also suggests that as Yōsai is described as having performed *nyūjo* that he became (in effect) a *sokushinbutsu*. However, the term *nyūjo* may simply imply the meditative death of a monk, and this case requires further research[10].

The relative "popularity" of *sokushinbutsu* practice in the Edo period seems to owe much to the popularisation of another early mummy, Kochi Hōin, through pilgrimage stimulated by a play '*Koichi Hoin Ōdenki*'. The only surviving copy of this was brought to Europe. Hori argues convincingly that the *isse gyōnin,* forced to flee Kōyasan in 1701, are the group *isse gyōnin* of Yudonosan which appeared around this time[11]. They would have brought much of "semi-orthodox" Shingon practice to a new mountain. These are very likely historical explanations for the *growth* of the phenomenon in the 18th/19th centuries. The *sokushinbutsu-miira* method of "self-mummification" is generally understood to be as follows:

1 *kokudachi* 穀断ち Abstinence from 5 or 10 staple grains[12]

2 *mokujiki* 木喰 "Wood eating"-pine needles, bark and sometimes *urushi* (lacquer) tea

3 *danjiki* 断食 Total abstinence from food after gradual reduction in intake.

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[10] Faure, B 'The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism' Princeton University Press 1994 p160

[11] Hori, I 'Self-Mummified Buddhas in Japan: An Aspect of the *Shugen-Dou* Sect' in 'History of Religions' 1/2 1962 p242

[12] Rice, barley, soybeans, red beans, sesame seeds, millet, broomcorn, panic-grass seeds, buckwheat, and corn

4 Inhumation in the earth, in some cases while still alive.

5 Exhumation after 3 years. With possible straightening and preservative treatments in some cases.

The term "self-mummification" is somewhat misleading because the monks all relied (to varying extents) on lay *sewanin* (世話人 caretakers) both before and after death. When I visited Dainichibō and met the head priest, after my ritual purification with an enormous wand he was keen to impress upon me (or any visitor) the most obvious substantial difference between a *sokushinbutsu* and a *miira* (ミイラ-"mummy", adapted from the Egyptian) is that the innards of the *sokushinbutsu* are intact, this being true of all except Tetsuryūkai. According to those at Dainichibō the terms "*miira"* or "mummy" were inappropriate. Although the relics of the monks have generally been damaged by rats[13] the bodies remain recognisably intact, which would seem to be a prerequisite for their worship…which explains the enthusiastic cooperation with scientists to preserve them. The first three stages of the process are still practiced in Japan to attain *siddhi,* though fasting only rarely leads to death. Blacker quotes a Mr Mizoguchi on Yudonosan as having lived "many days…on pine needles" which were "unexpectedly nourishing, and conducive to the development of second sight and clairaudient hearing"[14] The junior priest at Dainichibō also told me he practiced 1, 2 and 3. 4 and 5 are now illegal, and are either extinct or totally secret.

The *sokushinbutsu* practitioners entered the religious life for a number of reasons. Two, at least (Tetsumonkai and Shinnyokai) entered the religious life to escape punishment for

[13] Cockburn, T & Cockburn E (Eds.) 'Mummies, Disease and Ancient Cultures' Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980 p221

[14] Blacker, C 'The Catalpa Bow; A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan' Mandala, London 1986 p88

killing samurai. Honmyōkai began his austerities in prayer for his feudal lord's recovery from illness. Some had lived the lives of *sendatsu* leading pilgrims and lay believers' associations called *kō* 講, which by the early Edo period had spread all over Honshu:

> "(The *sokushinbutsu* practioners)… rendered great service to persons in trouble within their religious territories (*kasumi-ba*), so that they could be held in high esteem by the people"[15]

These holy men were the *hijiri* type, closer to the local community than the typical monk, whose institution had political or governmental involvements:

> "Shugen-dō masters obtained great powers for the good. These they often employed in their travels though the countryside in order to protect others. Indeed, some legends describe the ways in which these priests controlled nature itself, curbing plagues, droughts, earthquakes and typhoons"[16]

There have been attempts to categorise the reasons why individuals, usually poor, took on this difficult practice:

> "Whether the impulse comes from his own will, however, or from some apparently external spiritual being, whether he is what Hori calls the 'quest type' or the 'vocation

[15] Morimoto, I 'Buddhist Mummies in Japan' in '*Acta Anatomica Nipponica'* 68, 1993 p397
[16] Pringle, H 'The Mummy Congress; Science, Obsession and the Everlasting Dead' Fourth Estate, London 2001 p324

type', he can only acquire the special powers he needs to bridge the gap between the two worlds by certain ascetic practices"[17]

For these individuals, becoming *sokushinbutsu* meant taking their vocation to its ultimate limit. A large but unknown proportion did not achieve their aim:

"The appalling sufferings entailed by this austerity of self-mummification are well attested by the numbers of inscribed stones…which mark the graves of men who died before their vow could be accomplished…we read of Ishinkai, who died in 1831 before he could complete a two-thousand day fast; of Tetsuzenkai who died in 1838, Ryūkai who died in 1840 and Zenkai who died in 1856 in the midst of a thousand day fast"[18]

But one does not need to become a mummy in order to be thought to have attained the enlightenment of a Buddha. Why, then, was (is) there a tradition that believes that a process of religious "self-mummification" can lead to enlightenment/that enlightenment is demonstrated and made immanent by a completed process of "self-mummification"? My own understanding is that the necessary causal factor lies within the Shugendo prioritization of somatic ritual.

The best theoretical presentation of this concept can be found in a recent monograph on ascetic practices by Tullio Lobetti[19]. He devotes several pages to the *sokushinbutsu*, characterizing their practice as "*corpus ascensis*". By this he means a bodily ascension to

[17] Blacker, C 'The Catalpa Bow; A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan' Mandala, London 1986 p85
[18] Blacker, C 'The Catalpa Bow; A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan' Mandala, London 1986 p89
[19] Tullio Federico Lobetti, Ascetic Practices in Japanese Religion, Routledge, 2013 p131-136

a sublime or transcendental state. It is, in particular, one that is characterized by a physical progression through a series of Shugendo rituals. These rituals may have a clear intellectual historical link with the Shingon theory of achieving Buddhahood in this very body, *sokushinjōbutsu*. The relative attainability of the two is nonetheless different. The Shugendo system gives priority to the completion of rituals rather than the initiations, meditations and esoteric bodhisattva practices of the Shingon path.

Buddhist Studies scholars have taken an interest in understanding the motivations of those who undertook such this practice, and also sought to contextualize the *sokushinbutsu* practice within a normative framework of Buddhist ethics (as an aspect of a world religion) and value systems common in the religions of the Japanese archipelago. Many scholars, particularly those of a Japan Studies or Intellectual History background, would consider such approaches overly normative and, some would say, tending to impose moral and theoretical rules on the subject matter which may not necessarily apply. I recognise that this ethical approach is theory-laden, and have not taken it up as a key aspect of my own study. I would defend it, however, on the grounds that Shingon and Shugendo practitioners themselves would wish to express their practice within a more general framework of Mahāyāna Buddhist and Mahāyāna Buddhist inspired ethical and religious practice. The notion of self-sacrifice as a bodhisattva and, if successful in practice, the attaining the saving powers of a buddha was certainly a key rationale for the practice as explained to me by its modern day adherents. It is worth mentioning some of the various motivations for engaging in the practice, and these speak to its context and meaning. This is particularly important to this study as a whole, as we may reflect that these motivations and aspects of the *sokushinbutsu* tradition contrast to a considerable

extent not only with Christian mummified saints, but with the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai, commonly described as the ultimate basis for the practice.

The first motivation for attempting to become a *sokushinbutsu*, as recognised by previous research, is that of altruism. Carmen Blacker, who was perhaps the first non-Japanese scholar to take an interest in the *sokushinbutsu*, writes:

> "The motive which prompted these men, most of whom seem to have been peasants of local origin, to embark on so fearful an austerity, was apparently the disinterested desire to turn the power they had accumulated through their disciplines to the benefit of mankind after their death. Their torments they had undergone would endue them with power such that prayers addressed their mummy were sure to be efficacious."[20]

It is absolutely necessary to see the altruistic aspect of the motivations for this practice. However, the extent to which, at different points along the path, the altruism was tempered by a sense of social responsibility and obligation. It is impossible to know in detail to what degree the practitioners felt obligated to take this extreme route to apotheosis to meet the needs of the hard-pressed society around them. Quite apart from the desire to alleviate the suffering of the people in general by achieving Buddhahood, we must not ignore the existential threat to very rural temples unable to attract the support of pilgrims and parishioners. Matsumoto, Hori and Yamada seem convinced by this perspective argue that the Yudono practitioners, seeing that Kōchi Hōin had brought financial security to his temple, wished to attract pilgrims and donations in the same way[21].

[20] Blacker, C 'The Catalpa Bow; A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan' Mandala, London 1986 p89
[21] Yamada, T *et al* 'Collagen in 300 year-old tissue and a short introduction to the mummies of Japan' in K. Spindler et al (Eds) 'Human Mummies; A Global Survey of their Status and the Techniques of Conservation' ('The Man in the Ice Vol. 3) Springer-Verlag, Vienna 1996 p78

Indeed, on Yudonosan at least, there was great economic reliance on pilgrimage. This is certainly a great reason why the mummies were important to temples. It may also go a certain way toward explaining why the mummies were not well cared for from the time of the anti-Buddhist movements of the early Meiji period onward.

Pinguet highlights the practitioners' often unfortunate backgrounds:

> *L'ascétisme est plus facile aux malheureux, il peux donner l'espoir d'un success dans la mort qui leur a échappé dans la vie…L'intention de ces ascètes enterers vivants était donc d'accélérer par un coup de force le processus de l'éveil.*[22]

Certainly, the social context of entering the practice was typically an unhappy one involving death and/or poverty. This too should not be ignored in relation to this study, as it stands in marked contrast to the mummification of those with high institutional and/or cultic status prior to their deaths, such as Zen patriarchs and other Buddhist leaders who became mummies, Kūkai or the Christian saints.

A large proportion of previous research on the *sokushinbutsu* has given a misleadingly heavy emphasis on the Maitreya faith of the practitioners. Blacker writes:

> "It was alleged…what appeared to be death is in fact the state of suspended animation known as *nyūjō,* in which condition the soul may await the coming, millions of years hence, of the Future Buddha Maitreya"[23]

[22] Pinguet, M *'La mort volontaire au Japon' Éditions Gallimard*, Paris 1984 p120
[23] Blacker, C 'The Catalpa Bow; A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan' Mandala, London 1986 p89

Here we must distinguish the state of *nyūjō* from that of becoming a buddha in this very body. Eternal meditation does not necessarily entail the attainment of buddhahood. The term *nyūjō* has been used to express the death of respected monks, linking the practice with death, that is to say, the end of a fully lifelike state. A further level of explanation is required to move from *nyūjō* to becoming a *sokushinbutsu*. This connection is certainly not provided by the "waiting for Maitreya" model. One may ask why it is that someone thought to have attained perfect buddhahood through an extreme ascesis has done so in the hope of seeing another buddha in the vastly distant future. As buddhas, they would have nothing to learn *per se* from Maitreya (*miroku* 弥勒), who is himself not yet "officially" a fully realised Buddha. One may suggest in response that wishing to establish a karmic link with Maitreya would allow them to help beings in that time when the *sasana* of Shakyamuni is completely extinct, and thus was part of their bodhisattva project of unending work for others, continuing even after the achievement of Buddhahood. The problem of whether two buddhas can exist in the same "sphere" is not inherent of Shingon or *sokushinbutsu* thought, as all beings and buddhas can be thought to be part of the cosmic *dharmakaya* Buddha Dainichi. One might argue that the *isse gyōnin* were men who had faith in and took delight in devotion to the all Mahãyãna holy beings typical of esoteric traditions and were thus surely open to and involved in the practice of "awaiting Maitreya in eternal meditation". Raveri is one scholar who has emphasised the importance of the association of the *sokushinbutsu* with the figure of Miroku from the perspective of the *shinkōshūkyō* (cult) surrounding the practice[24]. He makes an important point, certainly, when he describes "*Il miira"* as "*un fenomeno che va contro a logica di ogni configurazione temporale*"[25]. It can only be through a unique and illogical view of time

[24] Raveri, M *'Itinerari nel Sacro; L'Esperienza Religiosa Giapponese'* Cafoscarina 1984 p118
[25] Raveri, M *'Itinerari nel Sacro; L'Esperienza Religiosa Giapponese'* Cafoscarina 1984 p117

and incorruptibility that a mummy could be expected to be intact 5.67 million years hence. I think it is a very worthwhile speculation to suggest that this belief could not have taken place outside of a place where the environment itself was a focus of faith. *Sokushinbutsu* outside of Yudonosan do not seem so concerned with Miroku. I tend to share, however, Faure's scepticism about the importance of the Maitreyan interpretation:

> "…perhaps the Maitreyan ideology is a rather superficial ideological addition: even in the case of Kūkai, it seems that logic at work is as much one of immanence (healing through contact with a mummified mediator) as of eschatology"[26]

It remains for scholars who assert the importance of Maitreya faith to the *sokushinbutsu* practitioners to provide some evidence for it. This interpretation seems to first appear in commentary provided by non-specialists among the *Nihon miira kenkyū guru-pu*. Miyata has stressed the sense of millennial hope associated with the *sokushinbutsu*[27]. Crop failure or disease are, however, "end times" concerns for a rural village of the time. Faith in the *sokushinbutsu* as saviour/preventer of disaster seems to be a meaningful side to the logic of future salvation here. The priests of Chūrenji and Dainichibō, in their detailed explanations of the *sokushinbutsu* faith did mention Miroku, but only in the sense that these mummies were not bound to decay before (quite a vague sense of) "the future" in the same way that I am. So, when the *miira* are considered to be "the real Miroku"[28], these days (at least) it is most usually from the perspective that all buddhas are one. These

[26] Faure, B 'The Rhetoric of Immediacy' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 p158
[27] Quoted in Raveri, M 'In Search of a New Interpretation of Ascetic Experiences' in Boscaro, A; Gatti, F; Raveri, M (Eds.):'Rethinking Japan' Vol. 2. Sandgate: Folkstone Japan Library, 1990 p254
[28] Raveri, M 'In Search of a New Interpretation of Ascetic Experiences' in Boscaro, A; Gatti, F; Raveri, M (Eds.):'Rethinking Japan' Vol. 2. Sandgate: Folkstone Japan Library, 1990 p254

practitioners meditated to become one with their tutelary Buddha (*goshinbutsu* 護身佛), not Maitreya *per se*. Neither purely this worldly (bringing benefits) nor other-worldly (transcendence, futurism in piety) as the full reasons for their being and the support of laypeople are not intuitively obvious for anyone of any religious motivation, we have here a very important and peculiar event in Japanese religious history. We might justifiably share Faure's concern:

> "One may in some cases also wonder to what extent these attempts at self-mummification were free decision of the individual or reflected the pressure and expectations of the community. In other words, were they not ritual suicides, and at times more or less consenting sacrifices…?"[29]

Kūkai was the most important personal model for the *isse gyōnin*. His early years as a wandering Buddhist lay ascetic, reflected in the *Sangō Shiiki* 三教指帰 and the idealized figure of Kamei Kotsuji, have an obvious similarity to the lives of most of the *sokushinbutsu*, who were intimately familiar with lay asceticism though Shugendō. Like Kūkai, they entered the ordained life in a spirit of commitment and devotion. The extreme asceticism practiced by the *sokushinbutsu*-to-be was, it seems, not mirrored in Kūkai's later years. However, this would hardly have concerned the later piety which centred on how Kūkai ended, or prolonged, his life. It has been believed in the piety of the Shingon traditions up till this day that Kūkai is still present on Earth (in Japan, at least) and is engaged in perfect immobility (*nyūjo*). Despite this, or perhaps because of his Samadhi, Kūkai is thought to accompany devotees on pilgrimages such as the *henro*. Reader and

[29] Faure, B 'The Rhetoric of Immediacy' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 p161

Tanabe quote the survey of Shingon priests undertaken by Saitō which shows that although doctrinally Dainichi is the main focus of veneration, in reality *Kōbō Daishi* is at the very centre. Although other sect leaders are worshipped as buddhas, Kūkai stands out for his perceived immanence. Attaining Buddhahood would be meaningless, asserts the '*Kōyasan Shingonshū danshinto hikkei',* if it did not include helping people in the here and now[30]. The *isse gyōnin sokushinbutsu* took the name character "*kai"* (海) to continue the work of the master.

Perhaps this accounts to an extent for both the Maitreya concerns on Yudonosan and the early acceptance of this by others. Furthermore, the story of Kūkai mirrors that of Kashyapa, who, in the tale brought to China by the pilgrim Fa Hsien (5th century), went deep into the Cock's Foot Mountain and entered Samadhi to await Maitreya. It is not possible to say for sure whether similarities like the *sokushinjōbutsu* practice of ringing bells from the tomb takes after the ringing of bells heard from the *Okunoin* recounted in the *'Konjaku monogatari'* XI, 25. Kūkai being said to have practiced *kokudachi* during his last weeks was certainly an influence. Similarly, it is simply not known whether Kūkai himself learned of Chinese *mokujiki* and *kokudachi* traditions in China, or whether he was influenced by the mummification of Subhakarasimha. Of course, some Japanese monks *learned* of these things; but were they learned with mummification in mind?

While piety directed Kūkai should not be understated, his thought and teaching provides a great deal of the philosophical groundwork for the *sokushinbutsu* practice. The doctrine of *sokushinjōbutsu* (即身成仏), attaining Buddhahood in this very body, is the term Kūkai (and others) used for the Tantric project of attaining enlightenment in one's present lifetime. Sanford translates *sokushinjōbutsu* as "bodily Buddhahood" to highlight what

[30] Reader, I & Tanabe, G 'Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan' University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1999 p167

he believes (with good reason) was Kūkai's explicit intention: to contrast his vision of physical enlightenment to the "mentalistic" views of other schools[31]. *Sokushinjōbutsu* thought in Shingon is bound up with the concept of *rokudai* (Six Elements 六大) and the *ryōbu mandala* (Double Mandalas 両部曼荼羅). The 5 physical elements and the mental element, of which we ourselves are made, are the body and mind of Dainichi. This intrinsic (*rigu* 理具) enlightenment and non-duality is expressed in the Mandalas. It is made manifest (*kentoku* 顯得) by the perfection of the Three Secrets (*sanmitsu* 三密) of body, speech and mind. These theoretical aspects of the esoteric attainment of Buddhahood need however to be understood within the content of the primacy of Shugendo ritual.

Whether there could have been Buddhist mummification in Japan without the influence of Kūkai is an interesting and genuine question, considering the first such case was a monk of Tendai training, and the (in some sense) "Amidist" Fujiwara mummies.

There is no doubt at all that the *sokushinbutsu* monks practiced the core meditations of Shingon. Material evidence of this can be found in many places, for example the Sanskrit A-syllable in the tomb of Shukai, who died performing *ajikan* visualisations[32]. This was surely the "Janus Faced" *ajikan* practice influenced by Kakuban *et al*, relevant to non-dual veneration of Dainichi/Amida.

The question of Chinese influence on Buddhist mummification in Japan is still somewhat open. Morimoto believes the Japanese phenomenon to be of independent origin, Sharf is of the opposite opinion[33]. To what extent we may link the immolations and mummifications of China, particularly those inspired by the Lotus Sutra and cognate

[31] Sanford, J 'Fetal Buddhahood in Shingon' in 'Japanese Journal of Religious Studies' 24/1-2 1997 p9
[32] Morimoto, I 'Buddhist Mummies in Japan' in '*Acta Anatomica Nipponica'* 68, 1993 p390
[33] Scharf, R 'The Idolization of Enlightenment: On The Mummification of Ch'an Masters in Medieval China' in 'History of Religions' 32/1 1992

traditions, is a difficult question. The link the practice of self-immolation found in Amidist not just Lotus Sutra devotee groups is discussed by Hori[34]. However, I would like to mention here that some influences on the *sokushinbutsu* are clearly of indirect Taoist origin. *Mokujikigyō* 木食行, particularly the consumption of pine, surely has a continental connection[35]. The *kokudachi* abstention from cereals practice … "can be traced to a Taoist source. The repulsion in which the holy man should hold the Five Cereals derives from the Taoist doctrine of the Three Worms (*sanchong* 三虫)."[36] These worms were believed to live inside us and speed aging, especially when they had their favourite food; cereals. One could therefore hope to encourage longevity by starving the worms out of oneself by depriving them of rice, wheat, millet, barley and beans. Faure[37] tells us that the Taoists never used this abstention from cereals for mummification purposes, but there are some cases, at least, which suggest that this has, in fact, taken place[38].

The Nihon Miira Kenkyū Gurupu 日本ミイラ研究グループ (Japanese Mummy Research Group) provided the following typology for Japanese Mummies based on perceived differences in their ideology:

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[34] Hori Ichirō 堀一郎 *Wagakuni Minkan shinkōshi no Kenkyū* 2 我が國民間信仰史の研究 II Tokyo Sōgensha 1955, p306ff

[35] de Groot introduces 『廬山記』と他の文献からの資料を紹介する:「千歳乏柏木其下根如坐人長七寸、刻乏有血。又松樹枝三千歳者其皮中有聚脂状如龍形、末服乏盡十斤得五百歳也.僊藥。」「仙乏上藥有松栢乏膏、服乏可延年。草木, 受服者皆至三百歳。僊人又過視之瞿謝受更生活之恩、乞丐其方、僊人告之日、此是松脂耳、此山中更多此物、汝錬之服可以長生不死。瞿乃歸家、遂長服松脂。身體轉輕、氣力百倍、年百七十歯不墮、髪不白。 僊藥。」「嵩高山有大松樹、或百歳或千歳。採食其實得長生。」「松脂久服輕身、不老、延年。松葉寸中、不饑、延年。柏實久服令人潤澤、美色、耳目聰明、不飢 、不老、輕身、延年。」de Groot, JJM 'The Religious System of China' Ch'eng-wen Publishing, Taipei 1969 p295-300

[36] Faure, B 'The Rhetoric of Immediacy' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 p157

[37] *Ibidem*

[38] See Benn, J 'Self-cultivation and self-immolation: preparing the body for auto-cremation in Chinese Buddhism.' 2000 Online at http://helios.unive.it/~pregadio/aas/benn.html *passim* Also, the mummy of the Taoist priest Sun at the Temple of the Jade Emperor, for example, is said to be "self-made".

A. Mummies of the Amida faith. (4 Fujiwaras of *Chūsonji* and *Shungi* of *Myōhōji*, Ibaraki Pref.)

B. *Sokushinbutsu* mummies of the Shingon faith. (10)

C. *Nyūjo* mummies of the Maitreya faith. (2)

D. Others (5)

This typology does not usefully distinguish groups B and C. It is hard to see why Shukai is not classified as a *sokushinbutsu*[39], given that he practiced the typical "Shingon" Ajikan mediation, has the suffix "Kai" to his name, and was a "learned Buddhist". The fact that he was devoted to Maitreya merely shows an interest in Maitreya which we know was shared on Yudonosan. The mummies from group D are particularly interesting as they offer a chance to understand the phenomenon of self-mummification more generally. Morimoto tells us they came from "many possible ideological backgrounds"[40]. However, B, C and D were all *Shugendō* practitioners, two at least being Maitreya devotees and all wishing to achieve something for their communities, I find the only obvious difference to be geographical, as all lived the lives of *gyōja* and *sendatsu*. Conversely, I cannot see sufficient reason to associate the Fujiwara mummies with the *Nyūjo* ideology or religious death via Amidism or anything else. Certainly, none of the deaths were deliberate on the part of the mummified Lords. The first three in the line died of illness/natural causes, and the fourth was horribly executed and mutilated[41]. Maybe the Fujiwaras died in a religious frame of mind, but maybe they did not. Later research showed the artificial methods of post-mortem mummification.

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[39] Morimoto, I 'Buddhist Mummies in Japan' in '*Acta Anatomica Nipponica'* 68, 1993 p397

[40] Morimoto, I 'Physical Characteristics of Buddhist Mummies in Japan' in 'The Journal of the Anthropological Society of Nippon' 99, 1991 p185

[41] Morimoto, I 'Buddhist Mummies in Japan' in '*Acta Anatomica Nipponica'* 68, 1993 p396

Raveri's comments "The *miira* himself is a living allegory"[42]. Without the body itself becoming transcendent, then there is merely the ascesis to be respected-as was the case regarding those practitioners whose bodies decomposed in the ground. Yet the *sokushinbutsu* are also relics in the great pan-Buddhist tradition of holy and somehow magic products of the ongoing merit of past masters.

> "At first glance, *Sharîra* and "flesh body" seem incompatible, since the production of *Sharîra* implies cremation and that of the mummy some kind of inhumation. Yet *Sharîra* and mummy can be seen as variants of the same phenomenon, a phenomenon familiar to anthropologists under the name of "secondary burial". In China as in many traditional cultures, the goal of double burial was to obtain an incorruptible body…"[43]

Relics imply a mediation with the other world, a mediation that seems at first glance to contradict the Mahãyãna coincidence between *samsãra* and *nirvãna*.[44] Yet mediation was the expressed purpose of the *sokushinbutsu* and thus they are relics *par excellence*. The vow of the practitioner and the karmic links of the supporters provide "coincidence between *samsãra* and *nirvãna*". The *sokushinbutsu*, as part of the *yonaoshi* type, have a different background to Ch'an mummies or Chinese *wangshen* (self-immolators) both of which did what they did for the benefit of less specific groups. Yet, with remarkable regularity the mummies of dead monks are described as "as if alive", the same comment typically made of "lifelike"/"living" icons. The mummy is an icon because it is an exalted state of a body, representing and embodying a spiritual state attained. The icon is like a

[42] Raveri, M 'In Search of a New Interpretation of Ascetic Experiences' in Boscaro, A Gatti, F; Raveri, M (Eds.):'Rethinking Japan' Vol. 2. Sandgate: Folkstone Japan Library, 1990 p255
[43] Faure, B 'The Rhetoric of Immediacy' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 p134
[44] Faure, B 'The Rhetoric of Immediacy' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 p135

relic (and may indeed contain physical relics) because it represents an ideal form of a holy being.

Of the four main motivations identified "altruism" is most significant. We have explored a little of the complex doctrinal background which sophisticates and sanitises this instantiation of holy man sacrifice. This begs further questions of perceived "orthodoxy" and ethics in relation to other "fringe" groups. Despite the 1960s ideological typologies, there is, overall, considerable ideological similarity between all instances of Buddhist mummification in Japan. Thus the Maitreya faith, while important to individuals, seems secondary to the practice; though through it we can understand the matters of faith regarding the duration of the new body. There is growing interest in this area of study, and it is now clear that "self-mummification" and even "self-mummification" for the benefit of specific communities has occurred throughout the Mahãyãna cultural sphere.

Indian Buddhism offers examples of entering eternal meditation. *Nirodhasamãapatti* is the term for this state. It seems to refer to a type of nirvana that can be entered temporarily. The foremost example of an Arhat said to remain in the world is that of Mahã-Kãśyapa who was said to be buried in the womb of Mount Kukkutãpada waiting to pass the robe of the Buddha on to Maitreya. Pindola Bhãradvãja, Kundopodhãníya and the Buddha's son Rãhula are arhats recorded as continuing to live superhumanly long lives, for various reasons[45].

The earliest cases of whole-body relics in China were mountain ascetics that were "found" mummified in their caves and enshrined in a temple nearby. In Chinese Buddhism abbots and high-ranking monks were often cremated, but generally, in most areas, clerics and lay-believers were buried. In part this was due to financial reasons.

[45] However, the Pãli texts state that Rãhula died before his father.

Wood was expensive, especially in Northern China. Moreover, there existed a strong Chinese tradition of earth burial that the Indian custom of cremation could not overcome[46]. That cremation stayed the exception was a necessary condition for the appearance of whole-body relics. Perhaps the first whole-body relics appeared in Central Asia, where the dry desert climate aided mummification. Since the 7th century the mummified bodies in China were coated and gilded to turn them into more durable images.

The *weikza* is a Buddhist holy man from the esoteric tradition of Burmese Buddhism. According to Spiro the *weikza* holy men are part of an eschatological sect that practises alchemy aimed at extending the lifespan and Buddhist meditation for the gaining of supernormal power[47]. Perhaps their groups could better be understood as "associations" (*gaing*) comparable to the *isse gyōnin*. Weikza have also played roles as leaders in community relief projects and activism leading to military uprisings. This is a role played in somewhat similar fashion by various local level Japanese holy men. Malalagoda emphasises prolonging life until the coming of Maitreya as a goal and adds: "Though the ultimate goal involved-the achievement of nirvana-is orthodox (Buddhist), the means adopted by these associations to achieve it are unorthodox (magical)"[48]. Notions of Buddhist orthodoxy regarding "magic" and method apply only artificially, of course, to *shugendō*. However, comparison between the *weikza* and the *sokushinbutsu*'s use of method and thought drawn from various traditions to overcome death within a broadly Buddhist context, at least, is valid.

Buddhist mummification is a notable aspect of Tibetan culture:

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[46] See the extensive discussion of funeral practices by Ebner von Eschenbach, S 'Die Sorge der Lebenden um die Toten: Thanatopraxis und Thanatologie in der Song-Zeit' Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1995

[47] Spiro, M 'Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes' Harper and Row, New York, 1970 p169-70

[48] Malalgoda, K "Millennialism in Relation to Buddhism" in 'Journal of South East Asian Studies' Vol 6 No 2 1975 p429

"…learned and revered incarnate lamas have been mummified in isolated cases, but this is the exception rather than the rule. The body of each successive Dalai Lama or Panchen Lama is placed in a container filled with salt, which desiccates the corpse within a period of three or four months. The mummified remains are then placed in a mausoleum made of various precious metals with ornamentations. …The manner in which the bodies of the Second, Third, and Fourth Dalai Lamas were disposed seems to be unknown."[49]

Other Tibetan methods include cooking in butter before salting and embalming, burial for three years in dry sand and drying over an oven. The thirteenth Dalai Lama's mummy is reputed to have turned its head northwest to indicate the direction in which its successor might be found.

The delay of bodily decay is seen as a sign that the deceased has attained enlightenment (the appearance of rainbows and rays of light are among other Tibetan "*zuisō*"). The continuation of this practice (and *translatio*) in postwar times has also been documented. Snellgrove gives the following account:

"A heroic villager, assisted by two nomads, had crossed into Tibet and retrieved the mummified corpse of the 'Precious Lama of Shang' from the place where he had died in 1958 in nomad country to the north. The corpse now sat enthroned in full regalia in Tr'a-gyam Monastery by Namgung, and as we had once known this lama

[49] Wylie, T "Mortuary Customs at Sa-skya, Tibet" in 'Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies' Vol. 25. (1964 - 1965), p233

as a friend and helper, we went up to Namgung to pay him our respects. Of all the things that one might retrieve from an occupied land, a corpse may seem a strange treasure. The face and hands were not improved by the gilt that covered them, and the smell was not very pleasant."[50]

Furthermore, there are various documents attesting to Tibetan attitudes toward the special nature of the bodily relics of saints. Most famous of these is the story of Milarepa. Milarepa describes the qualities of his relics as follows: "The three principles of my personality (i.e. body, speech, and mind) having been transmuted into the Body of Truth, there is no certainty that shall leave a corpse behind me"[51]. To allow those disciples far away to mourn him, multiple corpses are manifested[52]. For the benefit of a latecomer, the corpse reanimates[53]. However, there are problems with keeping the relics of a saint of Milarepa's quality on earth, it seems: "By celestial beings and the Dakinis will it be worshipped; If in the human world it should be left, it would slowly vanish…",[54] "The Orb of *Dharma-kaya,* (blemishless), And a relique-orb formed of earthly matter, Appear alike, but beware, and confuse them not."[55]

Personal testimony suggests that there were a great many mummified monks (*mardong*) in Tibet. Many of these were deliberately cremated to avoid desecration by Chinese forces during the initial invasion and later anti-religious purges. Some research has been done on these mummies[56]. It would seem that more are still to be found. The existence of the

[50] Snellgrove, D, 'Four Lamas of Dolpo' Bruno Cassirer, Oxford 1967 p65-66
[51] Evans-Wentz W.Y. 'Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa A Biography from the Tibetan'; London Oxford University Press 1969
[52] Ibid. p276ff
[53] Ibid. p283
[54] Ibid. p298
[55] Ibid. p299
[56] See Demieville, P '*Momies d'Extreme-Orient*' in '*Choix d'etudes Sinologiques*' Brill, Leiden 1973

mummy of the monk Sangha Tenzin in Ghuen village in the Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh has recently been made public. A Yudonosan style investigation was carried out on the mummy led by Victor Mair, who concluded the mummification was partly to do with the extreme cold and dry air of the region: "Slow starvation in the last few months of his life reduced the body fat and shrunk parts of the body that would have been liable to putrefaction."[57] The report did not say where the mummy is now being kept. Ghuen village is about 50km from the ancient Tabo monastery, which was a waypoint on an ancient trading route.

The mummy of Dasha Dorjo Itigelov, who was the leader of Russia's Buddhists from 1911 to 1927 has also made news recently, after an investigation led by Professor Galina Ershova who stated "Samples taken 75 years after the burial indicated that the organisms of the man's skin, hair and nails were no different from those of a living person"[58]. It appears he asked to be exhumed after thirty years. This was done in 1955 and again in 1973 before the 2002 investigation. On each occasion the body of the Khambo Lama was intact.

This introduction has shown that the subject matter under discussion is enormously varied in terms of period, place and content. The initial focus of research is always on the extant mummies, and the attempt is then made to glean earlier non-extant examples which may have been an influence. However, prior attempts to apply moral, ethical, philosophical and intellectual historical frameworks to the phenomenon have generally

[57] Mair Victor H. 'Mystery of the Tibetan Mummy' broadcast 2004 viewable at http://www.offthefence.com/content/programme.php?ID=95 Atlantic Productions in association with La 7

[58] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dasha-Dorjo_Itigelov
http://www.neplaneta.ru/hamba_lama.shtml
http://www.buddhistchannel.tv/index.php?id=3,1756,0,0,1,0
http://english.pravda.ru/science/19/94/378/15173_immortality.html
http://www.worldiscoveries.com/viewnews.php?news_id=40

failed due to the sheer variety of the subject matter. Yet attempts to treat the phenomenon as a whole persist, and attempts to reject doing so seem themselves overly theory laden. With a complex and international phenomenon such as this, a broad set of interpretive perspectives is necessary, yet there is a consistent aspect of commonality within the full range of instances of this phenomenon. I argue that constructivism provides the necessary breadth, and a focus on visual content provides the key to the perceived commonality.

Chapter 1 section 1

Constructivist perspectives

This thesis sets out to bring the broadest possible range of theoretical approaches and methodologies to bear on its subject matter. This is due to the breadth in terms of time period, authorship and intellectual content of the subject material itself. It is also due to the relative lack of easy explanations for the intellectual historical problem of the worship of mummified holy men and women in Japan and Europe. This eclectic approach is not only controversial, but actually actively unpopular. My counter argument to this negative view is that the theoretical content should be broad when dealing with broad and comparative subject matter. The reason for this is that observing a rigid approach will tend to limit one's perspective on the material to previously established frameworks. In the case of this study, those previously established perspectives are those of sect doctrine.

The aim of this section is to demonstrate the validity of comparative research methods within the interdisciplinary context provided by constructivism. It moves from a critical appraisal of comparative theory, drawing on its failures and reappraisals in religious studies, to a discussion and demonstration of its potential more generally in the arts and social sciences with particular reference to the work of the religious studies scholar Jonathan Z. Smith. An example of the potential applicability of comparative methodology in the social sciences and the social sciences is offered, taking constructivist theories of norm change as a specific focus.

Problems of comparative methodology

The religious studies discipline provides an interesting starting point for a consideration

of comparative methodology. In recent years there has been increasing clarity in the field regarding the nature and applicability of comparison. A key aim of this section is to demonstrate the interdisciplinary nature of this methodology and its potential for the reassessment of theoretical models; a purpose for which the predictive modeling found in the social sciences provides excellent test material. As theoretical frameworks have broadened to include relevant insights from literary theory and historiography, there is clearly a case to be made for the usefulness of this methodology within the social sciences, particularly within constructivist theory. Debate continues, however, among those who support comparative research and those who remain skeptical. The postmodern antipathy toward comparative research in religious studies has its roots in a reaction against an over-readiness on the part of scholars of religion such as Max Müller (1823-1900) or Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) to find essential similarity in disparate religious traditions. In a key section on the problems of comparative work the religious studies scholar Jonathan Smith describes the pitfalls of comparison in religious studies in terms of: "a process of working from a psychological association to an historical one; it is to assert that similarity and contiguity have causal effect. But this, to revert to the language of Victorian anthropology, is not science but magic"[59]. This represents the first and strongest of two major criticisms of the comparative enterprise. His identification of the comparative enterprise as a "psychological association" is of key significance. Comparison is something which is inherent to the observer and not to the observed phenomenon. The connection between the compared exempla therefore is something which is, in the first instance, personal rather than objective, and, arguably, represents no grounds for drawing a conclusion worthy of academic work in any field. Clearly, this only applies where there is no clearly

[59] Smith, Jonathan Z., In Comparison a Magic Dwells, in Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1982 p22, 26

established historical connection between two phenomena. With simple similarity alone insufficient to draw any inference regarding structural causes of the similarity, comparison is often seen as yielding little more than a list of the qualities of the exempla, which might well be achieved without comparison. Comparison might focus our attention on some aspect of a phenomenon which stands out in contrast, but these aspects should surely be apparent after a thorough non-comparative analysis, and do not represent something which was a special result of comparison.

A second argument relates to the contention that comparative observations are inherently flawed because they are theory-laden, typically with theories which are irrelevant to the exempla. In addition to concerns regarding the comparability of culturally specific data, there is the problem of disagreement over definitions for key terms. There are many viable definitions of religion, all of which apply to some cultural contexts better than others. Most scholars of religion would be satisfied that one could work within a certain definition, giving due consideration to its cultural biases, without discounting the others. Those who wished to contribute analysis to a comparative project could work with or reject the definitions offered. Deconstructionists, on the other hand, particularly those who study what I would call "religious activities" but are not tied to the religious studies discipline, may suggest that as there is no universally accepted definition of religion, to speak of it in academic contexts is misleading or at best inappropriate. Yet if deconstructive approaches are not applied generally, or indeed reflexively, they are subject to the same arbitrariness and bias they diagnose. Eagleton among others has written at length on weaknesses in post-modern theory, pointing to our shared humanity as the basis for our "ethical and political claims upon one another"[60]. Though the

[60] Eagleton, Terry, The Illusions of Postmodernism, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 1996 p113

problems of definition are amplified in cross-cultural comparison, the fact that scholars and others may freely discuss such issues shows that there is some level at which the subject matter in comparison, (e.g. religious practices), is reasonably well understood by all participants with a sufficient level of sensitivity to cultural difference. We may distinguish religious from non-religious rites and practices just as those familiar with art may distinguish it from graffiti or pornography: you know it when you see it. The answer to the skeptic is the fact that discussion goes on with or without her, and usually *with*.

In recent years there has been a more moderate approach toward comparative study[61] than was typical of the religious studies scholars of 20 and 30 years ago who, quite understandably, reacted against the over-enthusiasm of many among their teacher's generation. Representing this trend, Jonathan Smith has modified his approach in a recent section explaining the valid use of comparison in religious studies. He has contributed much to understanding of the abuse, and now the use of the comparative method in religious studies. It is worth quoting him at length. He writes:

> The "end" of comparison cannot be the act of comparison itself. I would distinguish four moments in the comparative enterprise: description, comparison, re-description, and rectification. Description is a double process which comprises the historical or anthropological dimensions of the work: First, the requirement that we locate a given example within the rich texture of its social, historical, and cultural environments that invest it with its local significance. The second task of description is that of reception-history, a careful account of how our second-order scholarly tradition has intersected

[61] See Paden, William E. Interpreting the Sacred: Ways of Viewing Religion, Boston: Beacon Press 2003 or Smith, Jonathan Z. "Close Encounters of Diverse Kinds" in Mizruchi, Susan L. (ed.): Religion and Cultural Studies, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2001

> with the exemplum…With at least two exempla in view, we are prepared to undertake their comparison both in terms of aspects and relations held to be significant, and with respect to some category, question, theory or model of interest to us. The aim of such a comparison is the re-description of the exempla (each in light of the other) and a rectification of the academic categories in relation to which they have been imagined[62].

So the benefit of comparative research is not in a discussion of how similar or dissimilar the exempla may be, or even the similarity or dissimilarity of their structural causes and effects. It lies rather in a sharing of perspectives and analytical categories in the study of the exempla, allowing for a richer and more informative discussion of each exemplum. This can be achieved, I would suggest, in two ways. One involves the application of the categories applicable to one exemplum to the other and vice versa, in the simplest sense of Smith's four moments. The other involves the application of wider theoretical categories including those which are applied in the existing research literature on each exemplum to the analysis of the other. This seems to be implied in Smith's four moments, and it equates to an application of interdisciplinary methodology. In religious studies, the theories and methodologies applied to, for example, Japanese medieval religious studies and European medieval religious studies are different. The reason lies not only in the obvious differences in subject matter, but in the fact that the people and institutions which study them are different and have different canons of influence. The barriers of language and specialist knowledge involved invite interdisciplinary and inter-specialty collaboration. I would argue that, as part of a considered comparison, this

[62] Smith, Jonathan Z. The "End" of Comparison" in Patton, K & Ray, B eds. A Magic Still Dwells-Comparative Religion in the Postmodern Age, Berkeley: University of California Press 2000 p239

interdisciplinary application of categories could lead to fruitful cross-pollination. Smith argues that comparison is of value where three facts are in place: "(1) the relationship to strong theoretical interests; (2) the wealth of the data available and the level of "micro-distinctions" between those data; (3) the consequent ability of the comparison to provide "rules of difference"[63].

There is also a more subtle problem. If the exempla involve something with wide reaching implications for our understanding of religion in a certain area and period, such as the veneration of holy men and women during the Middle Ages in Japan and Europe, the application of new categories begs the question of why a category which fits well with aspects of both exempla should do so. In studying a phenomenon exemplified in two distinct cultures in terms of its functions and the human behavior associated with it via the cross-application of categories, we have, as Smith says, moved from a psychological association (toward a conclusion regarding our theories). This, being so typically human, is not necessarily entirely misleading. Yet a comparative researcher claiming her categories match both exempla well might be faced with demands to make her position clear on that range of extremely difficult questions relating to structure and post-structure. She has, undeniably, seen what she wants to see in the comparison, but its implications stretch further than her power to explain. Smith's "magic" would seem to be at work. Her comparative study is in a sense a kind of magic in that the two distinct (yet on a psychological level comparable) phenomena are not juxtaposed, not ready for systematic comparison, until that comparative dialogue is provided. Mystery seems to remain concerning the structure upon which the stage for this act of comparison is set.

We may ask the magician to explain her trick, but is it necessary to ask for a full account

[63] Ibid. p238

of the structural and/or post-structural foundations of the enterprise? I would make three arguments against that notion. Firstly, the categories she applies and qualitative judgments she has made are structurally similar to a great deal of work in intellectual history and religious studies; which involves, in effect, the language of cross-cultural comparison. Descriptions of thought and religious practice as "comparatively new in community x" or "a reaction to external influence y" are naturally common. Furthermore, the vocabulary of religious studies, much like the vocabularies of social science disciplines, is largely Eurocentric and may face problems of intercultural applicability[64]. It thus begs the same questions regarding the effects of our understandings of structure. Comparative methodology has strong potential for the problematization of these issues.

Secondly, there is a common-sense argument to be made regarding certain concepts which apply consistently across cultures. These would include such things as physical sensations, instincts, basic needs and social relations. Moving beyond these universal or "hard" analytical categories, let us address the appropriateness of other categories. For example, in my research I have applied purity/impurity, long recognized as an important concern in the Japanese treatment of the dead, as categories in my analysis of death and burial in Christian Europe. A skeptic might argue against this on the grounds that the purity in medieval Japanese thought and the European (by virtue of the magic of comparison) "equivalent" are qualitatively different and thus the two cannot constitute a single category to be applied to the exempla. It would be a category error, however, to apply the standards appropriate to a specific instantiation subject to contextualization with reference to source material to a general term which acts more as a signpost to and from instantiations in context. "Cannibalism" or "celibacy of priests", for example, are

[64] See Joseph, George Gheverghese Reddy, Vasu and Searle-Chatterjee, Mary, "Eurocentrism in the social sciences", in Race & Class 31: 1990 p1-26

appropriate general terms for comparisons of those phenomena in different cultures not because of any pre-analytical (and therefore circular) essentialist assumption of structural similarity between the exempla, but due to the common sense intelligibility of the exempla under that general term as phenomena discernable amongst their context and causes.

The third argument is based on epistemological constructivism. This philosophical model of human knowledge may be likened to a free-floating raft taking on new elements where necessary and cutting loose that which is no longer useful. Rather than building knowledge on foundations upon which all must depend, constructivist epistemology can model the changes which take place in our world view without the need to re-argue and re-establish all the knowledge we have developed. Like its social science counterpart, epistemological constructivism offers flexibility and inclusivity in terms of theory. In constructivist approaches to the humanities and social sciences we have a methodology which has learned the lessons of the post modern backlash against positivism. Rather than using one theory or theoretician or the limiting, prescriptive aspects of "realist" approaches, we can draw on, construct, a framework of relevant aspects of theory without claiming ultimate or universal relevance for any of them. Comparison is very much at home, and perhaps only at home, in this environment. It is informative, descriptive and a means to turn data into information. It invites comment and criticism; expecting, with the constructivist, that parts of the raft will be discarded. Neither a thoroughgoing explanation of epistemological foundations nor the clarity sought by single focus realist models is among its criteria as a contribution to knowledge. Constructivist analytical narratives will be judged on whether or not they meaningfully and coherently move the discussion forward, and will remain useful until they are superseded by more accurate and nuanced

narratives. Comparative work is academic work which invites criticism, further input and even dismissal. It is risky, and produces complications more readily than neat reductions. It supplies a certain form of testability and falsifiability to the predictions and analyses offered by constructivist theory.

When a range of theories (Marxist, feminist etc) are applied, comparative work may serve as a counterpoint to existing scholarly interpretations which omit gendered discourse or discussion of economic and class relationships. In other words, it is a chance to apply multiple theories, which are often used singularly or not at all in primary research. It offers a chance to take a step back from the first analysis of the data. It may prevent errors in overly theory-laden observation in primary research.

An example of an inherently comparative research method which is rapidly gaining recognition in both the humanities and social sciences is the narrative analytical approach. This approach, which takes seriously the differences in the descriptions of phenomena provided by actors, has received increasing attention in recent years[65]. In the introduction to his book 'Narrative Policy Analysis: Theory and Practice' Emery Roe writes:

> Sometimes what we are left to deal with are not the facts-that is why there is a controversy-but the different stories people tell as a way of articulating and making sense of the uncertainties and complexities that matter to them...the final volume of edited accounts would still serve as a useful reminder to a policy analyst, such as myself. Their message was that in some controversies our tool kit of microeconomics, research methods, law, organization theory, and public management practice ceases

[65] For example Bates et al. 1998, or regarding the theories of the historiographer Hayden White see Roth, 1988: 636

to be of any real help[66].

The wide range of issues examined in the work include policy areas such as the 1980-1982 medfly controversy in California, irrigation-related salinity and toxicity in California's San Joaquin Valley, animal rights and experimentation, global warming and the controversy over Native American burial remains. Roe's comments quoted above relate a sense of disappointment or discomfort with data regarding which "As in Rashomon, perspective took hold"[67]. A comparative analysis of the different narratives will not usually yield a validity judgment among them. Nonetheless, a methodical recognition of difference may serve to prevent over-simplification and present the issues in an informative way. The alternatives to this, it seems, are to refrain from an academic treatment of the issues or treat the data in such a way that contradictory elements are smoothed into the framework provided by a certain favored theory or model (as with "the ax fight"). The least theory-laden of the three alternatives is surely the first. Materials for a narrative policy analysis could be drawn from a range of policy areas. An example would be a study of the narratives generated in the implementation of EU directives in Germany and the UK, or something similar with an EU and an ASEAN member state or states. These comparisons of narratives would not and should not provide any final arbitration on the issues, and this ought not to disappoint us too deeply. It would be an important contribution in support of an informed discussion and a means to judge the validity and range of academic categories, not a simple presentation of similarities and differences.

[66] Roe, Emery, Narrative Policy Analysis: Theory and Practice, Durham and London: Duke University Press 1994 xiii
[67] Ibid. ix

As recognized in Smith's four moments, the description of exempla and rectification of academic categories are key aspects of the comparative process. Part of the re-description may involve discussion of the ways in which the categories applied to one exemplum are useful or inappropriate for the description of the other. Through this discussion a pattern of data is built up reflecting the context of the exempla, some of which (that is, applicable categories) may be applicable in more than one exemplum. This should be reflected in the rectification. Grounded theory is an example of an inherently comparative analytical approach and comparative study as per Smith's four moments has much in common with it, particularly in terms of the application and re-application of categories. It is not generally taught to students of religious studies. This demonstrates the scope of comparative work to introduce inter-disciplinary methodology in the search for richer perspectives. Yet comparison is intrinsically limited to an act of reappraisal, and while it can claim to provide new information and even stimulate new primary research, in itself it provides no new data. In some cases, we must be satisfied with a banal (and thus probably unedifying) result of comparison.

I would argue that the usefulness of the results of comparative work to academics are perhaps most clear when the subject matter is exempla which have already been analyzed and modeled and the academic discourse has become laden with theory. There are models which are in need of greater nuance and contextualization, particularly with regard to intercultural phenomena in fields such as religious studies and the social sciences. In the next section I will consider the potential of comparative methodology within constructivism to enhance a social science theoretical model.

The application of comparative methodology in constructivism

> Any attempt to speak without speaking any particular language is not more hopeless than the attempt to have a religion, that shall be no religion in particular….Thus every living and healthy religion has a marked idiosyncrasy[68].

Santayana's words apply to the comparativist, who must be aware that they are taking a position of "marked idiosyncrasy", and at the same time take care to attend to the idiosyncrasies of those they study. The contextualization of exempla is essential to useful comparison. Constructivism in the social sciences provides approaches which invite structural contextualization, and highlight structural difference. Focusing on an example taken from constructivism in the social sciences allows us to consider the application of comparative methodology as explained by Smith on an academic model which is more purely theoretical (predictive rather than descriptive) than those typical of religious studies. The potential for useful feedback should be particularly clear when theoretical interests are also at the forefront.

In his 1999 work 'The Social Theory of International Politics' Wendt argues in contradistinction to neo-liberals and neo-realists that we must analyze the relationship between structure and actors. This broadening of the field is at the heart of the constructivist project. A great many scholars have pointed out the lack of psychological depth[69] provided by the likes of interest theory, "realism" and "game theory". Through its flexibility in comparison to more mainstream social science theories, constructivism has the potential to provide some of this depth. Theorists cannot be expected to provide this detail and depth in their models, but they should be expected to make room for it. Focusing on the norm diffusion theories of the constructivist thinker Martha Finnemore I

[68] Santayana, George, Reason in Religion, New York: Dover Publications 1982, first published 1905 p5
[69] For example Geertz, Clifford, The Interpretation of Cultures, New York: Basic Books 1973 p202ff

will suggest ways in which the comparative approach has the potential to add to her model, or at least invite depth to it.

Finnemore has written prolifically on the concept of norms. She defines a norm as "a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity." Two varieties of norm are identified. A regulative norm orders and constrains behavior, while a constitutive norm creates new actors' interests or categories of action. An "Institution" is the set of behavioral rules [which] are structured together and interrelate (a "collection of practices and rules")[70]". It is difficult to distinguish between these three varieties in practice. It would seem unlikely that something could create new categories of action and interests while not at the same time effectively ordering and constraining behavior. It is also difficult to think of a norm of either sort which is not in some way fundamentally interrelated with others. Finnemore, however, does not use these definitions consistently throughout her work. I will focus on a more specific aspect of her theory, that of norm diffusion. This process could be defined as the transmission of a norm from one national, cultural, institutional context, to another. To an extent, Finnemore is sensitive to the problems of norms in context; that is, the question of whether two instantiations of a norm in separate contexts may be properly understood as the same norm in both instances. She warns political scientists that: "The danger in using the norm language is that it can obscure distinct and interrelated elements of social institutions if not used carefully", for example, any treatment of the anti-slavery norm without sufficient attention to an historical context would lead to confusion[71]. Elsewhere, she states:

[70] Finnemore, Martha & Sikkink, Kathryn, "International Norms and Political Change," International Organization, Vol. 52, No. 4, International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics 1998 p891

[71] Ibid. p891

> As contemporary researchers make their arguments about norms, culture, and ideas, they will need to specify ideational causal claims and mechanisms clearly, think seriously about the microfoundations on which theoretical claims about norms rest, and evaluate those claims in the context of carefully designed historical and empirical research.

She also praises Lumsdaine for offering: "systematic evidence that morality actually does play a significant role in foreign aid by examining predictions from alternative explanations and compiling extensive evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, to arbitrate among explanations"[72].

Foreign aid from rich nations to poorer nations is an established norm. Part of its causal structure involves morality, and identifying that link between structure and actors is key to constructivist interests. However, morality in the culture of one donor nation will have differences to that of others. Therefore a clear categorization of moral discourse associated with the relevant influential political and religious traditions in an exemplum nation in comparison with others will add depth to scholarly treatments of this "moral content". This is a task for comparative study, a key part of which might be a narrative approach to the explanations offered by policy makers, analysts and others of the rationale behind foreign aid. This would provide qualitative data on localized norms; and through a comparative redescription of the exempla allow for differentiation and problematization of the implementation of the norm. The UN has set a target, as yet unmet, of a minimum 0.7 percent of GDP to be spent on official aid[73]. Though foreign aid is certainly used to

[72] Ibid. p890

[73] UN General Assembly Resolution (2626 XXV), October 24, 1970, para.43 via http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/25/ares25.htm accessed May 30th 2011

incentivize cooperation and for other "rational choice" reasons, the emergence of moral discourse and its qualitative content will provide important data with which to predict movement toward the general implementation or rejection of this norm.

There is a clear and intrinsic necessity for context building and for scholars to be aware of the ways in which the local reception of an internationally diffusing norm, its interpretations and its potential implementation outcomes, are interdependent. Comparative work invites a re-description of the exempla in the light of a re-application of scholarly categories as suggested by Smith. As Smith has pointed out, this input is particularly valid where theory is of key importance, as it is in a field such as area studies or international relations. This context building and provision of psychological depth is, of course, in many cases more than one scholar can do. Scholars with area-specific knowledge may provide the necessary input. These scholars may be, and should be, from a wide background of disciplines other than that of the theoretician. The theoretician should invite the commentary that he or she could use to generate useful comparative content. Why does this happen so little? Let us look at the ways in which Finnemore's model of norm diffusion could benefit from comparative input.

Finnemore and Sikkink discuss the institutionalization of a new norm in terms of a three-stage process[74]. The first stage is that of "norm emergence" among campaigners and the reform-minded which is followed by a "tipping point" stage at which an emergent norm has sufficient support to ensure it may no longer be entirely discarded. This tipping point lies between the stage of norm emergence and the second stage of "norm cascade", during which an influential group of actors take on the norm leading to its ever widening

[74] Finnemore, Martha & Sikkink, Kathryn, "International Norms and Political Change," International Organization, Vol. 52, No. 4, International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics 1998 p895

acceptance. The third and final stage is that of internalization, during which the new norm becomes common to the point that no significant debate on the issue occurs. To illustrate this, Finnemore gives examples related to women's suffrage and the role of medical non-combatants on the battlefield, regarding which there has occurred a significant and general change of attitude due to the initial efforts of activists followed by the acceptance of the norm by an increasing and then overwhelming mass of opinion, leading to general acceptance of the norm as a common principle[75]. Finnemore's model has the great strength of including the maximum number of relevant state and non state actors. The "institutionalization" of a norm *per se* is not what is being modeled, because this may or may not represent compliance. Finnemore quotes Lutz and Sikkink, who in their study of South America found the least compliance in the most "legalized" area, torture, and the most compliance in the least "legalized area, democratic governance"[76]. Thus the issue of compliance and non compliance becomes a central focus for the study of contrasting perspectives on norms. The question of what reasons there may be for non-compliance then presents itself. Nakamura has explored this notion in some detail[77], and identified cases of ongoing norm conflict at points and in places where a norm would seem to have been fully diffused as per Finnemore's model.

I would go a step further and suggest that the variations in quality and context of a localized norm, particularly as may emerge through narrative analysis, often demonstrate a "marked idiosyncrasy". This difference constitutes the basis for a redescription of the academic categories applied to the norm in general. In terms of Finnemore's model, this

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[75] Ibidem

[76] Finnemore, Martha; Toope, Stephen J. "Alternatives to "Legalization": Richer Views of Law and Politics" in International Organization, Vol. 55, No. 3. 2001 p755

[77] Nakamura, Ayako, 中村文子 Doctoral thesis, Tohoku University: *Jinken hoshō seido no genkai to guro-baru shakai ni okeru jinken kihan* 人権保障制度の限界とグローバル社会における人権規範 2009 p66ff

might be plotted as a "norm redefinition" stage after, or as a distinct part of the internalization stage. This stage relates to the inherently comparative juxtaposition of international instantiations of the norm inviting a redescription of qualitative categories applied to exempla norm instantiations. Redescription occurs not only among the academic observers of norm diffusion but also among actors. The international/general redefinition is realized in that a juxtaposition of different norm instantiations exists, and that this will often lead to a discussion involving actors with a particular interest in the norm. A debate over whether or not norms have been internalized "intact" may be found in many areas. Gender equality norms have been internalized in many countries to the point at which there is no serious argument made against them, but issues of negative gender discrimination remain an obvious social concern. The ongoing debates on local instantiations of democratic norms and the coexistence of major world religions with local religions are further examples[78]. A comparative aspect in the diffusion of certain norms seems inevitable. An example of these inherently relative norm concepts would be the recent interest in "gross national happiness", which involves an estimation of citizens' welfare based in part on samples of citizen's own judgments thereof. Happiness and well being will be expressed differently and more or less readily due to a range of cultural factors. This invites comparison not only of different cultures' approaches to happiness, but the description and re application of academic categories provided by a comparative

[78] Regarding the diffusion of Buddhist norms in Japan, see Miyake, Hitoshi, "Folk Religion," in Noriyoshi Tamaru and David Reid, eds., Religion in Japanese Culture: Where Living Traditions Meet a Changing World, Tokyo: Kodansha International 1996 p80, Reader, Ian. "Buddhism as a Religion of the Family: Contemporary Images in Sōtō Zen," in Mark R. Mullins, Susumu Shimazono, and Paul Swanson, eds., Religion and Society in Modern Japan, Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press 1993 p155 and Bowring, Richard, The Religious Traditions of Japan 500-1600, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008 p39

academic analysis. Thus constructivist models of norm diffusion may be enriched both by the description stage comparative area studies on two or more instantiations of a norm and the re application of academic categories used for their analysis. The alternative is to simplify the localization process, leaving the model open to the accusation of partial circularity in assuming that the norm at the start of the process may be properly and fully described as the same norm in every instantiation.

The result of an application of comparative theory is not a deconstruction of the common sense interpretation of one norm being diffused across cultural contexts. My own view is that the continuity with the original norm in terms of a shared original and overall category ("Buddhism", "Racial Equality") is retained, as may be demonstrated by dialogue among international groups as fellow Buddhists, communists or feminists. Simple qualifications of types and norms to imply the effects of localization are commonplace: "Japanese Buddhism", "North Korean Communism". Comparison and the description of difference seem natural or even unavoidable in processes of norm diffusion involving intercultural antagonisms, cases of norm conflict and friction during processes of internalization. There may also be ongoing resistance to certain norms due to their perceived provenance as much as their content. The resistance, for example, of many young Chinese nationalists to the promotion of a liberal human rights agenda stems as much from a stance against real or perceived western hegemony as from a thoroughgoing rejection of the content of that agenda[79]. This provides a key illustration of the necessity for the inclusion of some degree of psychological depth with regard to the modeling of norm diffusion; that is, recognizing the recategorization of a norm in a new context.

[79] See Wang, Zheng, "National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China", in International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 52, No. 4. 2008 pp783-806

Finnemore's theory is, of course, designed to be predictive rather than descriptive. There may also be some norms, perhaps of a technical nature, which are so uncontroversial as to undergo little meaningful change or juxtaposition other than that provided by their obviously new contextual setting. This may be an argument for the theory staying as it is and not making clearer its accommodation of issues of post-internalization norm conflict and norm change. Few of the norms which would be of interest to the political scientist, however, would not be better understood via a comparative treatment of their internalizations. Fieldwork, qualitative analyses and interdisciplinary approaches are necessary to provide the descriptions of the exempla. Perhaps the predictive model could be slightly modified to reflect more clearly the validity of this comparative description and (especially) subsequent re-application of categories, as this reassessment will itself be of significant interest to many of the actors Finnemore's model focuses on. They themselves will contribute to the narratives and dialogue relating to norm conflict and internalization, many from an analytical perspective. The comparative method, though designed in many ways for unrelated phenomena, offers an addendum to constructivist models of norm diffusion which heightens the attention paid to difference.

Concluding remarks

In cultural, political and academic life there is now more international exchange than ever before. Though this is further proof of the potential intelligibility of any human culture to other humans, Smith's assertion that inferences made regarding the nature and extent of structures from the observation of similarities between phenomena is not science but magic remains valid. In this section I have introduced and defended a comparative methodology following the rules put forward by Smith. I have also pointed to narrative

analysis as a means to address the issue of controversial or varied content within materials used in the description of exempla phase of the process, attending to internal as well as external differences. The reapplication of categories, "each in the light of the other", involving what is in effect an interdisciplinary consideration of each exemplum, is a means to assess the extent to which an exemplum is forced to fit received ("theory-laden") interpretations. If other analytical categorizations are possible, is there source material from the tradition relevant to the exemplum that might support them? Of course, analytical categorizations relating to religious, economic or psychological concerns may not be mutually exclusive. Reapplication of categories on many subjects may merely state the obvious. The scholar must make an informed choice, based on the availability of key factors such as the micro-data and theoretical concerns suggested by Smith. In practice this will be a personal choice on the part of the researcher. Perhaps even the most careful description, analysis and reapplication of categories have a subjective element which is unlikely to be removed even through collaborative work. It may be the case that comparative work is unlikely to be done without some initial "psychological association" implying the viability of a comparative study. But as in the construction of a Pacific Islands outrigger, the element of magic may become a synergic parallel to the construction of analytical projects using comparative methodology. Comparative studies will not build new knowledge per se, but a systematic approach such as Smith's may allow for new perspectives, invite interdisciplinary work, and serve as a check within theoretical models such as Finnemore's, providing an informative and provocative type of scholarship.

Chapter 1 Section 2

Bodily incorruptibility, identity and the image

Kṣitigarbha (Jp. Jizō 地蔵) is the only bodhisattva commonly portrayed as a monk. Although the origins of this tradition are unclear, some scholars believe Jizō's depiction as a priest stems from a 7th-century Korean monk named Gin Chau Jue who resided for 75 years at Chiu-hua-shan in China (present day Anhui Province) and who was believed to be an incarnation of Jizō. When the monk died in 728, aged 99) his body did not decay, and was subsequently gilded and worshipped as an emanation of Jizō. The image, at first glance, is defined by the legend. However, there must have been a pre-existing image of the undecayed body as sacred in order for this legend to be born. Indeed, the philosophical content of this aspect of the Buddhist religion (that Jizō has emanated in the form of that monk to save beings) is secondary to its visual nature, both tangible and imagined. The undecayed body of the monk was a visual, tangible thing to be interpreted by via the pre-existing cultural mores of those who saw it, and also by the theory and interpretation that they drew to the image itself. For example, what had the monk himself intended by leaving an undecayed corpse? This research project considers, in particular, the meaningful and/or intentional production of an incorruptible corpse, then venerated as a sacred object to be seen, an image. This is the only way to accurately model the web of influences spanning from the earliest to latest instances of the phenomenon of whole body relics.

This section considers the philosophical and theoretical problems of interpreting “living” Buddhist statuary and Buddhist funerary images, their uses and activities. It also presents subject material relating to “*sokushinbutsu*” and other Buddhist mummies in relation to

some of the issues these raise concerning the Philosophy of Body in the Eastern Tradition. I discuss the philosophical problems posed by this material such as issues concerning the identity of an image, the validity of copies and the ways in which art and images may or may not communicate with observers. In keeping with the overall theme of the conference, I will apply some of the theories and questions proposed by Western philosophers such as GE Moore and Andrew Harrison to these topics within Japanese Aesthetics and Arts, and relate these to recent theoretical work on Japanese Buddhist materiality by scholars such as Gerhardt, Rambelli and Sharf.

This section presents case studies on two things which in some senses arguably do not exist: living statues and deceased persons. This thesis focusses on a particular type of deceased person, the mummy as an object of veneration, and the majority of case studies I present will fall into this category. The mummies and the statues are clearly both religious images of sorts, but, as such, how should we describe their production, their particularity, their power to represent and to communicate? Philosophy, being, broadly, the act of providing appropriate definitions, will be involved in answering those questions. The case studies I will introduce provide examples which may reflect back on the theories applied to them and invite broader perspectives on philosophical questions of aesthetics and materiality. In religious art, particularly Buddhist art, faithfulness to prescribed dimensions and qualities of religious images is given presence over artistic originality. How then is the definition of these very individual and distinctive living images, living statues and mummies, constructed? Wittgenstein still gets to the heart of such problems of language, identity and definition:

> Either a thing has properties that nothing else has, in which case we can immediately use a description to distinguish it from the others and refer to it; or, on the other hand, there are several things that have the whole set of their properties in common, in which case it is quite impossible to indicate one of them.
>
> For if there is nothing to distinguish a thing, I cannot distinguish it, since if I do it will be distinguished after all.
>
> Ludwig Wittgenstein *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* 2.02331

The act of definition is prior to any definition. That extemporaneous act, becoming a group act and an act choreographed by opinion leaders is therefore the locus of definition. Many thinkers would say that a moustache drawn on the Mona Lisa would be a disaster for the image. Perhaps we may only say that it is a disaster for the image once the news of the defacement got out...

Some decades ago the artist David Hockney did some sketches and immediately faxed them to galleries. He provided the art world and philosophers with some interesting subject matter seldom afforded them by signed originals, at least genuine ones. On one occasion, he misdialled and faxed some sketches to someone we must, as the works have been lost, presume was not an art lover[80]. The story of the art medium itself, the fax, governing the fate of the art image when in contact with the audience, intended or otherwise, is one which relates to the questions of religious art and imagery. What constitutes an original? Does art communicate? Does it do so directly or as a medium? What part does the audience play in its definition? What, then, is the connection between the artist and the viewer? These questions could be addressed with reference to the work

[80]http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/reviews/david-hockney-drawing-in-a-printing-machine-annely-juda-london-1677831.html Accessed 2012/01/24

of Husserl, the post-moderns who followed him, or other thinkers working with the epistemology of human perception. That approach, or something like it, might be necessary to build a complete argument. Here though, I will bring in some relevant work of philosophers working in aesthetics and alongside the work of intellectual historians who have worked on the question of the religious image in general and the mummies in particular. This is less purely philosophical territory, and though I will draw some general conclusions at the end, no firm philosophical arguments will be among them. The material I bring in is varied and invites criticism rather than conclusions. I take a constructivist perspective, both in the epistemological and methodological senses, and in contrast to leading theorists such as Bernard Faure it is to the social construction of meaning that I look for definitions of images, rather than to either the image alone or its function alone.

The social aspect of an image relates to wider structural understandings of religion and ritual in general. Levi Strauss, Evans-Pritchard, Mary Douglas and others have claimed that religion takes its primary meaning as an expression of society, and anthropologists in general have explained religious practices in terms of particular societies[81]. The anthropologists, especially the functionalists, are surely correct when they draw reasonable parallels between a ritual and the type of society in which it exists. However, no matter how many socio-economic associations, power relationships and cultural peculiarities are included, religious practice generates experiences which are unpredictable to participants. "Rites, Durkheim tells us, are the rules of how a man should behave in the presence of sacred objects". Van Gennep adds detail to this structuralist framework with his preliminal, liminal and post liminal pattern. On the other hand, as the use of traditional wedding ceremonies by non-religious believers demonstrates, the form

[81] Douglas, M 'Purity and Danger' Routledge 1966, Evans-Pritchard, E 'Social Anthropology' Routledge 1951, Levi-Strauss, C 'Totemism' Penguin 1969

and content provided by images can be made use of in a way that relates almost exclusively to the social aspect of religious ceremony. In such a case, we may say with Malinowski that the common theme of a particular religious ritual, regardless of the religious attitudes of participants, is not science, nor magic, as no specific practical result may be expected from participation. It deals, rather, with existential needs. The couple were already officially married, but they felt the ceremony added something. As van Gennep points out, rituals have a direct meaning, in that what they portray is not secret, but a perceived truth about man and society reconciled with the universe[82]. That this is also true of art and the religious image is my main contention. I will also draw attention to synergistic works provided by religious leaders which I will argue are integral to a description of the "identity" of a living statue. This is, in a sense, a form of ekphrasis[83]-a rhetorical device in which one medium relates to another medium by defining and describing its essence and form, "telling its story".

I will defend the notion that the ritual treatment of living statues and mummies is essentially a "mimetic" act, with "ekphrastic" (synergistic) elements adding to the mimesis. Mimesis suggests the acting out of meaning, in this case the enacting and realization of religious ideas. In this sense of actively presenting or embodying mimesis, religious ritual art transcends mere representation. Jane Harrison tells us that "Ritual makes, as it were, a bridge between real life and art"[84]. This is the "thematisation" the artist him or herself had in mind. In this sense ritual art objects differ from religious art in general, which may relate to a representation of one individual's religious experience

[82] van Gennep, A 'The Rites of Passage' Routledge 1960 *passim*
[83] Plato: Phaedrus 275d Plato in Twelve Volumes, Vol. 9 translated by Harold N. Fowler. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1925. Accessed via the Perseus Digital Library http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=plat.+phaedrus+275d
[84] Harrison, Jane E, 'Ancient Art and Ritual' Oxford University Press 1951 p135

as well as to the presentation of the instantiation of religious experience through ritual. Ritual art is art which, though this may be true to a far lesser extent of the popular and famous artists, does not take particular significance as part of the oeuvre of an individual. Furthermore, it does not in the first instance find significance as a medium for communication between the artist and the observer or the art object as art for art's sake and the observer[85]. The ritual function of art is the main reason for the existence of the artistic creations commanded by religious professionals and patrons of the Middle Ages. These reflect a society that was greatly concerned with religious or post-mortem salvation. Today's society only rarely devotes so great a proportion of its wealth to any artistic endeavour. Ancient ritual, it seems, was the birthplace of most of the arts as we would recognise them today. Jane Harrison describes the connection between ritual and art as follows:

> "The ritualist is; to the modern mind, a man concerned perhaps unduly with fixed forms and ceremonies, with carrying out the rigidly prescribed ordinances of a church or sect. The artist, on the other hand, we think of as free in thought and untrammelled by convention in practice; his tendency is towards license…these two divergent developments have a common root, and the neither can be understood without the other."[86]

Perhaps if ritual art were to be proved qualitatively rather than merely functionally different to art in general, then we might imagine that a known forgery of excellent quality could serve better in a Church or temple than in an art gallery. However, the story of the

[85] See Harrison, A 'Philosophy and the Arts' Thoemmes 1997
[86] Harrison, Jane E, 'Ancient Art and Ritual' Oxford University Press 1951 p9

making and keeping of the art, the "fetishism of objects" and their identity applies to ritual art despite its function. Because part of the identity of high art is the difficulty of its copying, there was no casual attitude taken to it as was taken to the absurd multiplication of relics (18 heads of John the Baptist in Europe etc.). Copies or effective copies of ritual artwork have clearly been valued in an aesthetic sense for their beauty suitable for holy sites and holy rituals. Nonetheless, the history of veneration of a ritual art object adds to its sacred quality, and thereby to its ability to inspire with an aesthetically moving sense of depth. It may also provoke negative reactions even where it would normally please the eye or the current trends. Ritual art may be said to differ from most forms of art because its function is bound up in religious meaning, subject to the fortunes of that religion, such things as iconoclasms, and the changing needs for rituals.

Japanese Buddhist history offers numerous examples of Heian Period Buddha statues which display powers of intervention in the world and are sometimes referred to or treated as "alive", being the continued presence of Buddhas in this world. There was an immediacy to the ritual objects which is reflected in the rituals performed on the objects themselves, such as the eye-opening ceremony (*kaigen* 開眼) which marks the completion of the statue. As in the west, there are also many tales of statues which move and interact with believers. In both Buddhist Asia and Christian Europe there are tales of statues which move and interact with believers. There are also the many interesting tales both in Asia and Europe of ritual art objects being given by divine beings[87]. There are many examples to be found of statues undergoing rituals appropriate to living beings, such as the statue in Nihon Ryōiki 日本霊異記 Volume 2 Tale 22 which undergoes the secondary burial

[87] Jacobus de Voragine, Ryan (trans) 'The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints' Princeton University Press 1995 Volume 1 p150, Volume 2 p50

practice known as *mogari*[88]. Christ, for example, was thought to be present in such a miraculous image to the extent that the image reacts as if it were a person. But nonetheless the blood which comes forth from a bleeding statue is not the blood of Christ in the sense of his incarnated body but is analogous, rather, to his Eucharistic blood. The Heian notion of *shōjin*, the nirmanakaya apparition of the Buddha in this world of no Buddha is something similar, and extends to include some holy men and very revered Buddha statues. Like the Christ statues, they are in this world for hortatory purposes (the significance of the human agency which is obviously involved is interesting), but there is some connection with the "original" subject.

The ritual itself speaks of the connection between the observer and the object. The religious reality of the objects shows that when ritual art communicates, it is between this world and that, for benefit and salvation. In this sense ritual art objects differ from religious art in general, which may relate to a representation of one individual's religious experience as well as to the presentation of the instantiation of religious experience through ritual. As ritual actions require a ritual to which all may defer, so too do images which truly represent otherworldly presences. In medieval Asia and Europe we there were Urbilder, primary images which guaranteed the authenticity of other images in the world. In the Buddhist world, these were the Udayana lineage statues said to have been based on sight of the historical Buddha. In the Christian world there were *acheiropoieta*-those images not made by human hands such as the Mandylion, and images such as the Turin shroud among the *brandea*-touch relics.

After the questions of what is represented, communicated or presented by art in ritual,

[88] Izumoji Osamu 出雲路修校, Ed. notes by Satake Akihiro 佐竹昭広 Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei 新日本古典文学大系 30 *Nihon Ryōiki* 日本霊異記 Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1996 p96

there is the question of how it makes us feel. This surely applies to religious art with relation to the religious beliefs of the observer. A quality of ritual art is lost when the ritual dies, or when the belief dies, or when the memory of the venerated individual is lost. Were moderns to re-enact an ancient Greek ritual using the same art objects it would likely be more mimicry than mimesis, as the feeling would be lost. Hence we could hardly define the images in the same way as those who originally worshipped them. With their enlivening contexts lost, it is as if they have become copies of their original selves.

Some of the best work on the nature of East Asian Buddhist living statues, icons, relics and mummies seen from a theory of art and image perspective has been done by Bernard Faure. Faure rejects the mimesis hypothesis:

> "…the kind of Buddhist icon under discussion here is a *vera icona*, with a presence that gives it life. As a "manifest trace" of the Buddha, it has the nature of an apparition and is not just a simulacrum. … Historians of art, who have inherited the Platonic notion of mimesis, have tended to undervalue or overvalue these images as "artistic representations," more or less realistic in their nature and hence aesthetic-icons in the Peircean sense. They have for this reason missed their "indexical" truth, creating a gulf between "the real and the double.""[89]

Yet *habent sua fata picturae*-pictures have their fates. Through life's vicissitudes their appearances change, the treatment they receive changes, their contexts come to be altered and re-understood. If the mimetic model, and the theories of ritual art offered by scholars such as Jane Harrison are not valid, then what will explain the great changes in the way

[89] Faure, Bernard 'Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism' Princeton University Press 1996 p237-8

in which images are understood? My contention is that these models apply to a greater extent than Faure has suggested. I accept, however, his concept of "mediacy" provided by Buddhist "living" imagery and believer, and his (self-explanatory) concepts of "degrees of presence" "(mental) projection"[90]. Yet, "presence" is not an "image". We have no image of the world of the buddhas in which the originals abide. Why then are some images defined as more alive than others? Does the theory of synergistic content which explains this apply to art and living image in equal measure?

In the case of the Hockney's faxes, the burning and the sending were clearly (in the end at least) part of the artwork, and in some sense at least the "original image" was in the hands of the recipients. They had the original artwork, as it was as the artist intended, but did they have all of it? The first image was surely clearer than the facsimiles, but it was not the final piece. Would having it to look at, like the pentimenti of a Caravaggio, tell us more about the piece than the extant images? These days the answer is probably "no". Hockney is using an I-pad[91]. There is little need to provoke the art establishment by disposing of the "originals"; the sketches are on servers and emailed to galleries immediately after he completes them. The data the recipients have is surely identical to that on Hockney's own I-pad, at least if looked at on another I-pad. The iPad has a function that animates the drawings "I can see just how I've made the strokes to form the drawings"[92]. The artist's work is shared directly with the viewer, and so is a great deal of the artist's intentions and working. The philosophical problem here is that the communication patterns involving artist, artwork and viewer put forward by Harrison and Wollheim et al are turned around somewhat…these patterns apply, but they are

[90] Ibidem p257ff
[91] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-11666162 Accessed 2012/01/24
[92] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/mobile/technology-11666162 Accessed 2012/01/24

synchronous with the medium and the act of transmission and the act of appreciation. They are inseparable from its identity.

In 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility', Walter Benjamin talks of the "aura" of images of certain things made in certain ways. Mechanical reproduction, he argues, limits that aura[93]. Perhaps we might talk of an aura through resemblance, and aura through cult. But why do images constructed a certain way have a certain power? Verisimilitude to either an individual or an Urbild such as the Udayana statue is extremely important, and the means of achieving this is also important. The construction and recognition of Urbilder is, however, the work of a certain epistemic community. Hence the social input provides the range of viewers, from uninitiated outsiders to informed insiders of the relevant epistemic community, with the information with which to understand the image. (The Buddha image is now popular with many who have little acquaintance with Buddhism). Benjamin's concept of an "aura" of an individual transmitted through a sufficiently meaningful medium would at first glance seem to be an argument for the communicative qualities of artistic media themselves. It seems impossible, however, to deny the priority of social conceptualization of iconic images which has a defining impact on the nature of art and what it may communicate, including felt phenomena such as "aura" or "pathos". These reactions are based neither in the medium itself nor in the intention of the artist, which remains a first cause rather than a final cause of the communication. Like Leontes in 'The Winter's Tale'[94], the context we bring to a statue is part brought with us and part provided by those around us.

There is an "original" image and a "localized" image of it, just as there is a dharmakaya

[93] Benjamin, Walter, Jennings, Michael W and Doherty, Brigid (trans.) "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version," Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 2008, p.27
[94] Act V. Scene III

Buddha in the land of the buddhas and a nirmanakaya Buddha in this world. The "original" is easy to distinguish, but a "localized" version may be a nondescript copy or, at the other extreme, a "living statue". The difference lies in the level of synergistic, ekphrastic, cultic content available. The localized image in the case of the most photographed barn is, if you like, the image of the photographers lining up to take the shot.

The Acala ("Fudo Myō" 不動明王) which Kakuban worshipped as the main statue of the Mitsugon-in (密厳院) temple was crafted by the famous Unkei (運慶 1173?-1223), but the liveliness expressed through its "ordinary eyes" (*heijōgan* 平常眼) is the visual aspect which marks it out as special. Kakuban's devotion to the statue, involving meditations on becoming one with the statue takes its structure from esoteric works such as Kukai's '*Sokushin jōbutsu gi*' (即身成仏儀) and Kakuban's own '*Gorin kuji myō himitsu shaku*' (五輪九字明秘密釈). According to different versions of the tale, Kakuban variously hides from assassins either behind or next to the statue, which is then either stabbed or shot with an arrow. Blood comes from the statue and the would-be killers retreat in fear and confusion. In the arrows tale both Kakuban and the statue receive arrows to the knee, and both bleed[95]. The oneness between them and the livingness of the statue is doubly clear. Of course, if we take the stories at face value, it is easy to imagine why the would-be murderers were scared away. Thinking to the hortatory purpose behind the tale, it is clear that the narrative is shared between the statue and Kakuban, the aura (Benjamin) of the charisma-built, ritually enhanced individual belonging to both of them simultaneously. This is what it means for the statue to be alive. When the murderers run, "they don't see the image", they see the social efficacy that has been established for it.

[95] This tale is found in a work entitled *Mitsugon Shōnin Engi* 密厳上人縁起, included in Miura Akio 三浦章夫 (Ed.) *Kōgyō Daishi Denki Shiryō Zenshū* 興教大師傳記史料全集 Tokyo, Bunseido 1989 p78-79

They see the efficacy of Kakuban's Buddhist practice and the reality of the Acala. The link is not between artist and audience, or even ritualist and participant, but within the relevant epistemic community. One way of looking at the Kakuban episode is, with Faure, that he becomes the mediate, one with the original (Acala in the land of the buddhas) by means of his esoteric practices. Yet, it is also true to say that Kakuban, with his theory of esoteric enlightenment in which mantras bring about a pure land in the five viscera of the practitioner provided the context for the statue. It was, in effect, ekphrastic, synergistic meaning. There is also the aspect of Kakuban's story reflecting the "original" tale of Kukai's "eternal meditation" and display of the bodily marks of the enlightened. So the mediacy provided by the statue is inseparable from the epistemic community, dependent upon it. The interesting thing about this example is that it idealizes the form of the mediate image being appropriated by the devotee, the observer. It might be understood as a metaphor for the role of living images and enlightenment images of practitioners not only in an esoteric sense but also in a philosophical one. The further philosophical point here is that though the statue is mediate, the limits of its ability to communicate are not only set before its construction, and its mediacy between this world and that of the buddhas.

Religious leaders of different types[96] have an important role in setting the mood of ceremonies[97], sometimes a state of deep emotion and excitement as seen in many Pentecostal groups[98]. This effervescence seems to validate classical theories about collective and individual motivations behind religious emotions and their role in building

[96] Barth, F "The guru and the conjurer: Transactions in knowledge and the shaping of culture Southeast Asia and Melanesia" 'Man (New Series)' 25, pp640-653 1990、Andelson, J "Routinization of Behavior in a Charismatic Leader" 'American Ethnologist' 7, pp716-733 1980

[97] Corten, A 'Le Pentecôtisme au Brésil: Émotion du Pauvre et Romantisme Théologique' Paris, Karthala 1995、Fer, Y "Genèse des émotions au sein des Assemblées de Dieu polynésiennes" 'Archives des Sciences sociales des Religions' 131, pp143-64 2005

[98] Csordas Thomas J. "Language, Charisma, and Creativity The Ritual Life of a Religious Movement 'University Of California Press Berkeley 1997 p109

social solidarity (Durkheim 1925, Radcliffe-Brown 1968, Turner 1990). The social role of religious leaders as arbiters of trust[99]is also clear. There are inner and outer epistemic communities with regard to all aspects of religious images. As one becomes more involved with a religion or with art appreciation, one naturally becomes more knowledgeable about its rituals and received meanings. The more one learns, the more one becomes able to relate to the full range of content in an image, even a complex religious representative image such as a mandala. Religious leaders often play a key role in the meaning and authority attributed to a religious image. I would like to give some examples of the way in which religious leaders act in the manner of "bricoleurs[100]", using the materials at hand and adding their own where necessary, with regard to the treatment of 'living' ritual art objects.

The Shakyamuni statue held at the Vulture Peak Hall, the Ryōzen'in 長岳寺霊山院 on mount Hiei 比叡 was, in the Heian period, considered to be a emanation of Shakyamuni, and thus to a very real extent, Shakyamuni himself. Under the leadership of Genshin (源信 942–1017), the Shakakō confraternity 釈迦講 was founded in 1007 to provide services for this statue as if it were the real Shakamuni and the Shakakō members were his disciples. The activities of this group can be understood from its ceremonials, *kōshiki* 講式 David Quinter defines *kōshiki* as: "a type of liturgical text originating in tenth-century Buddhist circles, proliferating in the medieval period; and still performed in modern Japan. These "ceremonials" are usually devoted to specific buddhas, bodhisattvas, saints, or kami, but they can also eulogize individual scriptures, *waka* 和歌 poetry and

[99] Coleman, J "Social Capital in Creation of Human Capital" 'The American Journal of Sociology' 94, pp95–120 1988, Sosis, R "Does Religion Promote Trust? The Role of Signaling, Reputation, and Punishment" 'Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion' Volume 1 2005 Article 7

[100] Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 'The Savage Mind' Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. 1966 p19ff, Jacques Derrida, Writing and Difference, trans. Alan Bass. London: Routledge, p278-294

poets, or such concepts as the awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment (Skt. *bodhicitta*)."[101] Written by Genshin in 1007, the *Ryōzen'in Shiki* 霊山院式 and *Mainichi Sahō* 毎日作法 tell us of the activities of this group and the great solemnity with which the statue was to be treated. The list of members of the Shakakō is also extant, and this reflects participation by both lay and monastic members of the upper class. The Hokkekyō teaching that the Buddha still exists on the Ryōzen was an influence. According to the biography of ("director of monks") Genshin *Genshinsōzuden* 源信僧都伝, the Ryōzen'in in which Genshin preached the Lotus Sutra was considered by some to be little different to the "original" Ryōzen, and the great disciples were painted on the walls. Yet the rituals surrounding the Shakakō did not continue long after the death of Genshin. Without that leader, the meaning of the art and ritual faded. The key role played supplied by the leader relates to the maintenance of mimetic ritual and "ekphrastic" liturgy. The mediacy of the image, and even the "degrees of presence", are be dependent on cults as Faure himself states: "Thus icons not only have to be animated; they have to be maintained alive by daily cult activity, without which any icon ends up gradually losing its efficacy. This is a vicious circle, since an icon with no efficacy rapidly loses its worshippers". The aesthetic point is that it is not the image itself which is providing the heightened mediacy offered by a "living" icon. This is provided by the work of the cult members, especially the leader. Faure's initial point concerning the limits of the mimetic model holds true concerning a simple or common religious image, that is, not a "living" image. That common, unenlivened genre is the status to which the image returns when the synergistic content fades. That defining cultic content (ekphrastic and mimetic) is made anew for each living statue; this content is not secondary to the image but coincident

[101] Quinter, David 'Invoking the Mother of Awakening-An Investigation of Jōkei's and Eison's *Monju kōshiki' Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 38/2, 2011 p264

with it.

The famous “Seiryōji Shaka” statue owes a great deal to a famous contemporary of Genshin, Chōnen (裔然 d.1016). Henderson and Hurvitz in ‘The Buddha of Seiryōji’ have discussed the document hand-printed by Gishin (義真 781-833) and Chōnen recording their vows to build a temple in Kyōto. The insertion into the statue seals the vow, and the sense of personal connection between the statue and the leaders. Henderson and Hurvitz go on to describe how Chōnen, apparently, even inserted his own umbilical cord at the birth of the statue[102]. The power and popularity of the statue when it was eventually enshrined in the Seiryōji is attested to by the many copies that were made of it, one of the best known and apparently miraculous being that commissioned by the monk Eison (叡尊 1201-1290), now held at the Saidaiji 西大寺.

This statue represents a long tradition of representing the historical Buddha, as it is said to be based on one of the Udayana Buddha Statue lineage statues[103], an Urbild. This lineage is perhaps the example par excellence of bound up together in the ritualized tradition of keeping the form of the Buddha with its saving power in the world through statuary. The myth and the rite, then, are synchronous, and one does not actually explain the other, as Durkheim has presumed. With regard to an individual instantiation of the lineage, however, the “degree of presence” of the “original”, the holy being, is contingent upon the ritual community. Thus, the communication involved begins and ends within an epistemic community who have assigned different roles to organizers, producers and worshippers of an image. Where motivation for ritual linked to a certain statue is clearly linked more to the personal faith and charisma of a certain living, guiding leader of a

[102] Henderson, G and Hurvitz, L “The Buddha of Seiryōji: New Finds and New Theory” ‘Artibus Asiae’, Vol. 19, No. 1 1956

[103] Rhie, M ‘Early Buddhist Art of China and Central Asia’ Brill, 2002 p441

religious community (perhaps with the exception of sect founders), then the attributes of a statue are far less likely to continue intact (The Shakakō of Genshin died soon after him). The more performative Mukaekō[104] of Genshin have continued to this day, perhaps because they require less time/place specific social input to enliven, that is, to identify the images.

Kathleen Fitzpatrick discusses the section near the beginning of the novel '*White Noise*', in which the "visiting lecturer on living icons" goes to see the Most Photographed Barn in America[105]. One of the thoughts at play in the novel and meta-discussions "do the people who go to take a photo of the barn see the barn, or the barn as image?" The most photographed barn is photographed as is, not on foggy days, or with herds of cows passing in front. Reproduction of the image in an accepted way, showing an acceptance of the rules associated with it, is valid "thematisation". This scenic barn with its mountainous backdrop is a real place; it can be found about 15 miles north of Jackson Hole, Wyoming and has been on photographer's "must visit" lists for years. The image is endlessly reproduced, but each shot and each shooter is quite distinct. The other compulsory photo the site offers is of a group of men with tripods lined up taking the barn shot. The people who gather there take part in the image making and the making of the image of the image making. It is an *event* in society as much as an image. So too is a living icon. The greatest of all Japan's living icons is Kōbō Daishi Kūkai, believed to have entered undying meditation in 835 and to still be present in the Okunoin of Mt. Kōya today. The story of his eternal meditation emerged around 150 years after his death, and the visitors started

[104] See Dix, Monika "The Mukaekō Ritual at Taimadera: A Living Tradition of Medieval Japanese Pure Land Buddhism" in 'Illumine' Vol 2, No 1 2003 and Bryant, Gail Chin. "The Mukaekō of Taimadera: A Case of Salvation Re-enacted" in 'Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie' Vol. 8, 1995

[105] Fitzpatrick, Kathleen 'The anxiety of obsolescence: the American novel in the age of television' Vanderbilt University Press 2006 p102ff

to arrive. First there were high ranking nobles, and eventually a massive popular cult evolved. This "original" was soon "copied" by other Shingon monks such as Ringa (仁賀 dates unknown) and Yuihan (維範 d.1096), perhaps influencing Kakuban and certainly influencing the monk Kōchi Hōin (弘智法 c.1290-c1350) *sokushinbutsu* of Dewasanzan, who each took the character "kai" (海) in recognition of their debt to Kūkai. Each tale different, what Kūkai's remains really looked like became beside the point. Eventually none were allowed to enter the Okunoin inner sanctuary in which Kūkai was enshrined save three yellow robed ritualists who brought food to him each day. The performative aspect of this ritual is still performed today. Kūkai himself, however, is no longer limited to the Okunoin where he cannot be seen. He is regularly at large throughout the land in the form of a pilgrim; the synergistic context is now self-building. "We do not see the image", yet Kūkai has nonetheless become the *sokushinbutsu* Urbild. The visible mummy has an advantage over the statue as it is already imbued with a local and particular personality. It is disadvantaged by the fact that this is contingent on the audience recognising the buddhahood of the individual. When the Shugendo model came into disfavour the mummies on Dewasanzan were neglected. Zen mummies' ranks are recognised more institutionally; a simple and effective means of perpetuating their individual functions. The *Kokochomonjū* 古今著聞集 c.1254 424 contains the tale of a certain bricoleur whose mother's body did not decay after her death. He set about persuading people to worship it. None would have come if the qualities of a mummy had no established aura, no synergistic qualities. The belief in karmic links forged between mummy and worshippers is present in all these cases, but equally present is that fact that the image is no longer the person it represents. This is not as simple as idealization, it is a ritualization…sometimes with the leading to the warping of the "aura" of a living person

as Benjamin understood it and the dominance of the aura of ritual imagery.

As Sheila Harper has shown, people "do not see the image" of a dead loved one, they believe the "original", that is, the "person" they now looking at, is the person as they were not only when alive but in good health[106]. As the mummy becomes less personal and more symbolic, they embody the event of their mummification-a proof of their enlightenment-more and more. There is a human need to add content, and thus the "image", that is, the person, becomes more and more indistinct. Janice Mann has studied the cult surrounding the African American former steel worker Malice Green, beaten to death by two white policemen in Detroit on November 5th 1992. Instead of provoking riots such as those after the beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles, this incident led to pilgrimages to a memorial site. Political rather than personal themes take on a quasi-religious dimension here. The site is surrounded by crosses with references to Christian and Black Civil Rights themes[107]. The idealized picture of Green, painted on the wall of a crack house, has been "miraculously" enhanced with tear soaked eyes by rainstorms. In eulogy to Green, Rev Charles Adams lists him with famous black people beaten and persecuted by whites[108]. Green as an individual and his personal status or influence is by no means the crux of this minor cult, rather, his suffering and death as a black man persecuted are central. Malice Green was worshipped at the place of his death and not at his tomb, somewhat depersonalizing the episode. This is typically only the case in issues where a public sphere consideration, such as road safety, is involved. Though there are no memorials to those killed, say, in agricultural accidents. There are no tributes to those who die of heart attacks while walking down the street. Natural causes and workplace accidents seem neither to

[106] Harper Sheila "The social agency of dead bodies" in 'Mortality' 15:4, 2010 p309ff
[107] Perlmutter, D and Koppmann, D (Eds) 'Reclaiming the Spiritual in Art: Contemporary Cross-Cultural Perspectives' State University of New York Press 1999 p120
[108] Ibid. p123

lack explicatory meaning nor have the socially recognizable significance of a death in the line of uniformed duty.

In his popular book "The God Delusion" Richard Dawkins writes:

> "Pope John Paul II created more saints than all his predecessors of the past several centuries put together, all he had A special affinity with the Virgin Mary. His polytheistic hankerings were dramatically demonstrated in 1981 when he suffered an assassination attempt in Rome, and attributed his survival to intervention by Our Lady of Fatima: 'A maternal hand guided the bullet.' …it wasn't just Our Lady who, in the Pope's opinion, guided the bullet, but specifically Our Lady *of Fatima*. Presumably Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Medjugorje, Our Lady of Akita, Our Lady of Zeitoun, our Lady of Garabandal and our Lady of Knock were busy on other errands at the time.[109]"

Dawkins is simply making light of Catholic thought here, but his point relates to key problems of religious image and identity. How should we describe the difference between a deity and a deity as it appears in a certain location? What would make the best icon; an image of the saint as they actually were or as they have become stylized or localized? Who arbitrates the value of likeness in iconography? It is, after all, not in the form of a 1st century Judean that Mary appears to her believers. It is the often blue clad and often Caucasian-featured figure of the statues and paintings. What mental shorthand was the Pope then applying when he spoke of the intervention of "Our Lady *of Fatima*"? This

[109] Dawkins, Richard 'The God Delusion' Black Swan 2007 p56

was surely a distinct image-event: the form of the base image was becomes secondary. For piety's sake returning to the example of "America's most photographed barn"; one might arrange a dozen outwardly identical barns against the backdrop of the same mountain range and even set about advertising the locations, but how many would go? It would take a long while to break the spell of the original…not for its visual merits or outward appearance, but due to its social context. How could we get back to the image itself? Perhaps only an outsider, lost but concentrating on road too much to see the signs to the most photographed barn, might come across it by accident and simply appreciate the form of the image. He would probably want to take a photo. It would seem that the epistemic community that relates to the apparition of "Our Lady *of Fatima*", far smaller in terms of meaning and image-identity than that relating to the Marian cult and the image of Mary more generally, is distinct and commands a distinct instantiation of Mary. The Pope lent his authority to it, and the structures around the initial Fatima cult grew as it became better known, in terms of images this is comparable to the redefinition through popularization of the barn. The distinctions among the images and instantiations of saints and deities are clearly built up by people as much as by the saints or deities who are supposedly present in or through their many different statues or apparitions. The image is contingent on the human imaginaire, and Dawkins implies that the existence of the saint or deity is similarly so. The answer of the believer is that the form of the image is secondary to its cult, with perhaps the exception of the Udayana lineage of Buddhist statuary. The primary locus of identity in a religious image is, therefore, the ritual, social side of the interaction. Yet this is true of any recognizable image. Faure's description explains "apparitions", but images less so. The ritual creates an experience of the "image" in association with the physical image which in itself becomes a kind of secondary image.

When the ritual, the cult aura, dies this is what fades along with the "level of presence". When this happens, the image only has power through the aura of verisimilitude.

Dawkins' example draws out a certain philosophical contradiction in the non-mimetic, non-ekphrastic mediacy model. The observed apparitions, those special living images, are described in their local forms, not in terms of their otherworldly original itself. The definition "our lady of…" relates to a certain social content, written about, ritualized and theorized and contingent upon that for its vitality. Without that information, the definition is no longer possible. What would have happened to the Shaka kai if the statue had been replaced with an identical copy? Surely the copy would not have the same identity as the original (despite the belief that the initial virtue of this image was that it was a close copy among a lineage of close copies). We might speculate that a need to ensure individuality transcending "image" or "external form" is a reason for the insertion of model viscera, sutras and other objects inside many Japanese Buddhist statues.

We may try to place identity in the image, or in the wider synergistic context, but in the final analysis these part of the same act of image building bricolage. Hockney has recently filled the Royal Academy of Arts gallery with an exhibition of new work[110]. In it he has placed a sign which says "all the artworks here were made by hand of the artist himself"[111]. This was reported as a criticism of artists such as Damien Hirst who separate the art from the craft of making it, employing assistants and using low skill level techniques such as flicking paint at rotating canvasses, making hundreds of very expensive images the buyers could make themselves. In a sense, Hirst's privileging of the image over the craft is a recognition of the bricoleur over the specialist craftsman who offers an obviously unique image something. To misappropriate Benjamin's term, Hirst's aura of production

[110] http://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibitions/hockney/
[111] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-16475983

permeates these works, they become distinct and distinguishable because they have the high profile of Hirst's oeuvre. Like the barn, like the living image, we see so little of the images themselves. Hockney would have us watch time pass with him in the brush strokes of his East Yorkshire paintings, but is he less the bricoleur? There is little space here to go far into the question of the extent to which more abstract artworks, and artworks which value creativity over craftsmanship may provide an opportunity for artists to escape a "bricolage" defining their work. In the first instance, the artists themselves are part of the social bricolage of value and recognition attributed to an image or artwork; artists are themselves aware of the aesthetic and economic value of a piece as generated by its use of methods currently in vogue and its place within the artist's oeuvre. Short of a thought-experiment situation in which someone is brought up in a closed room and taught to paint, it would seem that this is inevitable. Even where artists seek to control the context of their art, the extent to which this can be achieved is quite limited. Marc Rothko had been commissioned to provide paintings to adorn the plush Four Seasons restaurant. He visited the place but apparently hated the décor and the restaurant in general and refused to continue the project, returning the commission cash advance to the owners, the Seagram and Sons Company. His unwillingness to "sell out" became, in a sense, part of the works he completed for this commission and part of the reason it has endured, but the fact that the original Four Seasons context endures despite the artist-who willingly took the commission in the first place-demonstrates that the final context does not belong to the artist but to the informed viewer. We know his left wing politics, but we also know the friends who were his executors turned the sale of his works into a cheap scam for their own profit. It seems unlikely that he would be pleased to know his discomfort with the trappings of commercial success and commercial buyers may distract his admirers as it

surely distracted him.

Even with fine art, then, the overriding importance of social meanings becomes apparent. Durkheim has shown in his famous study on suicide, which at first glance might appear an overwhelmingly individual act, that meaning is shared. Furthermore, there are many examples of those who have undergone rites of passage appropriate to the dead being considered as such although they have not "died". This is a status of social boundary, not a scientific physical status. The status of "dead" (though in many cases merely "dead *to us*") may be applied without rites when a certain boundary has been crossed. In modern UK and US society, the example of Jehovah's witnesses treating friends and relatives who have left the religion as dead is well known. On scientific examination, bodies may be considered either dead or alive and the boundary between alive and dead decided in an objective way, or, alternatively, in a way appropriate to the boundaries set by the scientific world-view. However, as in the case of the *sokushinbutsu*, members of the in-group may take the opposite opinion. Social definitions are paramount. The significance of a death relates to social roles and identities. Some deaths are understood positively, as in the cases of *Fudarakutokai* 補陀落渡海, *shashin* 捨身 and other forms of Buddhist suicide. It has been shown that in some cultures the deaths of infants or those without clear social roles has often been less marked by funeral ceremonies and mourning than the deaths of those in whom society has invested a great deal, whose roles must be redistributed[112]. Perhaps a similar trend has existed in Japan, where children up until a certain age have been considered to belong to the kami, and as such might leave the human world more readily.

The *aporia* surrounding the priority of the original and the interpretation shows that the gulf between "the real and the double" is legitimate. To define is to distinguish

[112] Hertz R, Needham R and C (trans.) 'Death and the right hand' Cohen & West, Aberdeen 1960 p76, 84

(Wittgenstein), even in the case of apparitions. These living images, with their visual and synergistic qualities (including mimetic aspects) may be understood as experienced in terms of qualia. In relation to our (irreducibly personal, but partially communicable) qualia, the living images are something close to: ""artistic representations," more or less realistic in their nature and hence aesthetic-icons." As such they communicate and evoke, but not with the directness of abstract art. They need to be telling us something we already know. Thus they are by nature quite distinct to an otherworldly "original", "the real". The social "frame"/syncretic content of the image is tied, as we have seen, to the image itself. Theoretically, then, there must have been some Urbild, an original mummified saint to which all links. The purity of a fractional relic and the perfection of the Christ and Buddha bodies are the two elements in its makeup.

Chapter 2 Section 1

Nihon Ryōiki and miraculous bodily incorruptibility in Japanese Buddhist thought prior to the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai

Let us in this section acknowledge that hortatory hagiographic works involving decay and non-decay around the time of death and after death existed in Japanese Buddhism before Kūkai and before his *nyūjōsetsu* in the 10th century. That context of holy and unholy death expressed in terms of decay or lack thereof may be found in the *Nihon Ryōiki* 日本霊異記, a work representing an earlier stage of Japanese Buddhist cosmology and soteriology than that of the 10th century. It is also an early prior example of such content in a "syncretistic" or "theoretically broad" context. With reference to the *Tenjiku Ōjōden*, we may also conclude that within the concept of Pure Land salvation demonstrated and represented in a this-worldly body existed in Japan even at the time of Kūkai himself. These factors are significant as counter-examples to the argument that the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai is an import of a pre-existing work such as the Chinese *Tendai daishi den* 天台大師伝, which has been a key assertion of previous research which I would suggest is not necessarily convincing.

Recent scholarship has made a very strong case for Chinese roots for a significant proportion of the *Nihon Ryōiki* and *Konjaku Monogatarishū*[113]. Though I have argued that the influence of Japanese *ōjōden* on the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai is a far better explanation for its form and content than any Chinese influence may provide, we should not ignore the great influence Chinese models have undoubtedly had on

[113] Kobayashi Yasuharu 小林保治 and Ri Meikei 李銘敬 *Nihon Bukkyō Setsuwashū no Genryū* 日本仏教説話集の源流 Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2007

Buddhist hagiography throughout the Heian period. This thesis acknowledges the coming together of a great many threads of influence on the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. Yet in examining those threads, the overall significance of the themes of bodily salvation, and interaction with holy people including *ōjōnin* and *shen* is our focus, rather than the national provenance of the content per se.

What concerns us here is the milieu that caused Japan's great saint Kūkai to be presented as undecaying after death and then eternally present in the Okunoin. The key themes of East Asian Buddhist hagiography, the Pure Land form foremost among them, all played their part in making up this milieu. These, and the *nyūjō* legend itself were nonetheless employed to address Japanese concerns. The significance of Kūkai's eternal meditation pervades the Japanese archipelago, but rarely has it gone further. Thus this section is limited to a consideration of Japanese Buddhist Intellectual History.

As argued in section 2 of this chapter, the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai begins in the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* (986) and 1004 in a way largely identical to the *ōjōden*. At this stage there is merely the assertion that his body did not decay. The legend develops to present Kūkai's continued presence body and soul in the Okunoin, this being the he legend of the eternal presence of Kūkai, body and soul, at the Okunoin which has been a constant of Japanese popular religion ever since. This, undeniably, is a this-worldly understanding of Kūkai's sacred status. But, is it an understanding which can be entirely explained by the Shingon doctrine of *sokushinjōbutsu*, achieving Buddhahood in this very body? Understanding the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai (*Ryūshin nyūjō*) purely in terms of the Shingon *sokushinjōbutsu* is attractive to many largely because, *prima facie*, it may appear to provide the simplest explanation. Yet, this apparent simplicity is misleading given the Pure Land influences established by this research, the

breadth of the appeal of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and the wider content of bodily salvation in Japanese Intellectual History. It is therefore valid to explore the broader context for this-worldly understandings of salvation as it was prior to and following the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai.

There is some inherent mystery as to whether bodily *zuisō* such as incorruption, sweet fragrances or a prayerful position being held long after death relate to the purity of their spiritual state and location of their soul or are no more than miraculous signs of the actions of the buddhas and bodhisattvas who responded to their devotions. It would seem fair to understand both these factors to be generally coming together at the point of death. Yet, this issue is clearly relevant to an understanding of the extent to which the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and the the legend of the eternal presence of Kūkai, body and soul, at the Okunoin can rightly be understood to be properly explainable solely in Shingon *sokushinjōbutsu* terms or whether they-along with Shingon *sokushinjōbutsu* need to be understood in relation to a trope of conceptualizing salvation and signs of salvation within the body. We must ask the question to what extent is corporeality a requirement of ancient hagiographic representations of salvation. Turning to the *Nihon Ryōiki*, we may trace the early instantiations of the connection between the location of a spirit and the fate of the body.

Let us turn, then, to the *Nihon Ryōiki*, representative of Buddhist hagiography prior to the Heian *Ōjōden* and the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai itself. As the earliest major example of Japanese Buddhist hagiography, it is the proper starting point for a consideration of how bodily salvation may have been understood in the background to the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai.

The *Nihon Ryōiki*, said to date to the year 822, was written by the monk Kyōkai 景戒.

The tales range in time from the reign of Empress Suiko 推古 (593-628) until the reign of Emperor Kanmu 桓武 (781-796). That is to say, tales 5 and 30 from volume 1 are set in the seventh century, the remainder are set in the eighth. The range of Chinese、Buddhist and otherworldly locations and motifs, suggests that the boundaries between various traditions that exist in modern religious studies were perhaps less real to ancients such as Kyōkai. One must recognize the significance of the *Nihon Ryōiki* as a precursor of all ancient Buddhist hagiography, regardless of whether one is convinced by my suggestions regarding the Pure Land influences on the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. However, there is a further area of comparison between the special deaths of a saints leading to Pure Land rebirth in the *Nihon Ryōiki*, and the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. This relates to the question of cosmology. The *Nihon Ryōiki* demonstrates an overwhelmingly this worldly understanding of post mortem destinations. The *ōjōden*, in contrast, is focused on rebirth in a place far from this world, so far as to be another dimension not accessible in our this worldly physical forms.

A period of uncertainty as to whether the dead person might return to life existed in both Japanese and European cultures, particularly until the end of the early Middle Ages. Perhaps because medical science had no sure way of establishing with certainty in some cases whether or not death had occurred, funeral practices have reflected the need to wait for a sure sign of death. “Laying out” of a corpse allows for this. *Mogari* is a type of what anthropologists call “secondary burial”. There are various theories on the purposes of *mogari*, most of which emphasize practical aspects. Some see *mogari* as a means for recalling the spirit (death is not yet final). Others see *mogari* is a means to suppress the wandering of spirits and bring them repose (postmortem).They have entered a liminal, marginal state in which the spirit may move with relative freedom in the worlds of the

living and the dead.

Of particular interest to me are the parts which show a link between body and the status of the spirit. I have discussed the question of the location of the spirit with regard to the miraculous fragrances and preservations found in the *ōjōden* and various Christian medieval works. The *Nihon Ryōiki* shares with the *ōjōden* literature the premise that there is some connection between the soul and the corpse which becomes explicit especially in the cases of holy people, wherein a religious message is conveyed. In this case the boundary between pre and post-mortem existence has apparently been crossed. The *Nihon Ryōiki* also has some good examples of the ambiguity of the dualist model with regard to the corpses of those who have met particularly good or bad fates in the afterlife.

Another key feature of the *Nihon Ryōiki* work is the multitude of post-mortem locations which it includes, and the lack of attempts to distinguish between them. Some of the locations, along with some of the tales themselves set in Japan, may be based very directly on Chinese materials. This gathering from a variety of sources perhaps accounts in part for the considerable variety in content.

The notion of hell, however, does seem more prevalent in the (supposedly) later tales. It is interesting to note that the otherworld as seen in the *Nihon Ryōiki* does not seem divided into 2 or more separate locations. Further, Yomi is a generic term for the whole place (See tale Vol. 3 .35). The Pure Land is a special place where only top monks like Kanki 観規 (?-782) Vol. 3 .30 Shingon 信厳 (dates unknown) Vol.2.2 and Dōshō 道場 (572-585) Vol.1.22 are reborn. The boundary of Pure Land rebirth is thus far harder to cross in the *Nihon Ryōiki* than in the *ōjōden*, in which men and women of all classes achieve pure land rebirth.

Ōjō was considered a great spiritual achievement. Gaining entrance to the Pure Land

was within the gift of the various buddhas of the Pure Lands, but winning their favour was not something to which all could aspire regardless of practice. Along with appropriate faith in the buddhas and performance of the relevant rituals particularly as death approached, the spiritual state of the individual was also relevant in the mid to late 10th century. Later notions of easy salvation for all were not yet formed.

The spirit-body dualism that is typical of the majority of ordinary *ōjōnin* in the Heian *Ōjōdenshū* is not present in the *Nihon Ryōiki*, though there is indeed a clear sense of a spirit of some kind which may act separately to the body. This is not, however, to be understood to be a clear or consistent presentation.

To understand the context of bodily salvation in the *Nihon Ryōiki*, we must first introduce the cosmology which can be seen in the work, one which differs significantly to that of mid and late Heian period hagiography. In many ways, the cosmology of the period understood this worldly human life and that possible in the various post-mortem locations in terms of a single dimension, separated for the most part by fate and distance. This contributed, perhaps, to interest in very physical concepts of salvation. This gave way to a more abstract system by the Middle Ages, in which this world and that were far more inaccessible to each other, with only certain sacred places and objects representing qualified exceptions to this rule. Nonetheless, the presence of afterlives demonstrated on and experienced in the body at this early stage is of obvious significance to the development of the 10th century milieu that gave rise to the *zuisō* and the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai.

The *Nihon Ryōiki* does not present matter and spirit as things of different dimensions to the extent that we moderns may understand them to be. We find are examples of when the spirit has left the body and gone somewhere else (in this case, later to return), there is

still some connection with the location of the spirit expressed through the body. I am particularly interested in the *Nihon Ryōiki* because it is early, and because it has influenced later literature. There are tales of journeys to the other world recorded before the *Nihon Ryōiki* (for example the tale of Urashima no ko 浦島子 Tale 14 of the *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀), but a large number of tales of this nature are collected in it. Return to life is dealt with by the *Nihon Ryōiki* Volume 1: tales 5 and 30, Volume 2: tales 5, 7, 16, 19, 22, 25 and Volume 3 tales 9, 22, 23, 26, 30, 35, 37. This is a total of 15 tales out of 116. Yamaori emphasizes these tales as of great influence and significance as source materials for an understanding of the relationship between mortuary rites, soul and body[114].

Yet, to whatever degree the body and spirit are separable, the overwhelming trend of the period is toward a monistic view of what came to be seen as "this world" and "the other world". That is to say, travelling to the other world could be done in the spirit or the body, and thus that other world and the spirit that went there were not things of another dimension or frame of existence. In the earliest times, everything was in this world.

Having taken due note of this monistic context, let us look in greater detail at some of the materials showing experience of salvation or damnation in the body. However, in many cases here, however, the individual in question comes back to life. In tale Vol.1.5

> 屍に異しき香有りて馝馥る。天皇勅して、七日留めしめ、忠を詠むはしめたまふ。三日を逕てすなはち 蘇甦る。妻子に語り曰く「五色の雲有り。霓の如く北に度る。其より往きて、其の雲の道芳しきこと雞舌香の如し。[115]

[114] Yamaori Tetsuo 山折哲雄 *Nihonjin no Reikonkan: Chinkon to Kinyoku no Seishinshi* 日本人の霊魂観：鎮魂と禁欲の精神史 Tokyo: Kawade shobo shinsha 1994 *passim*

[115] Izumoji Osamu 出雲路修校, Ed. notes by Satake Akihiro 佐竹昭広 Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku

If the experience of Yomi is totally other to the body, then why is a fragrance coming from it? There is some mysterious connection between spirit and body which makes this possible, it is surely not a sign brought about by a god or Buddha. For the purposes of our consideration of the intellectual historical lineage of the elements of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai material, it suffices to draw attention to the connection between spirit and body at this formative point in Japanese Buddhist hagiography.

The notion that foul smells accompany the bodies of evil doers developed in the *Ōjōyōshū* (this aspect of late 10th century thought is given as an example in the previous paper of a heightened interest in the body and its post mortem state which typified the representative Pure Land thought of the time) are found in the *Nihon Ryōiki* in simpler form. Tale Vol.3.26 tells of the evil and usurious wife of a local aristocrat falls ill and is takes to bed. After a long illness she has a dream in which she visits Yama who tells her she will be punished in that very life. However, she passed away that same day. They did not cremate her but called monks to pray for her for 9 days, leaving her in *mogari* for 7 days. On the 7th day she returns to life and opened her own coffin lid. “The stench was indescribable” and she has turned into an ox from the waist up. After 5 days she died. The prayers of her family were in vain. This is an example of typically otherworldly punishment being experienced by the body. The theme of odour is also present. In this case, an auspicious post mortem experience is expressed through the medium of smell.

> その七日の夕に、更甦還りて、棺の蓋自づから開く。是に棺に望みて見れば、はなはだ臭きことこと比無し。腰より上の方は、既に牛と成る。

Taikei 新日本古典文学大系 30 *Nihon Ryōiki* 日本霊異記 Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1996 p16

額に角生え、長四寸ばかりなり。二の手牛の足と作り、爪皷けて牛の足の甲に似たり。腰より下の方は、人の形と成る。飯を嫌ひて草を噉む[116].

There is some deep connection between the location of the soul and the spiritual state on one hand and the fate of the body on the other. The time leading up to death and immediately after death is a liminal time, where the karmic results of one's good or evil may become apparent on the body. This cannot be fully explained simply with reference to the liminal state experienced in the return to life stories during the period of the *mogari* of these individuals. Hell can be entered in this world, but not only by taking a trip to Tateyama or the like. Tale Vol.2.10 tells of a man who steals birds' eggs and meets this fate:

一の兵士有り。我を召して将て来たりて熾火に押入る。足を焼くこと煮るが如し。四方を見れば、みな火の山に衛まれ、出づる所の間無し。故に叫び走り廻る」といふ。山人聞きて袴を褰げ膊を見れば、膊の肉爛銷り、其の骨璅在る。ただ一日を逕て死ぬ。誠に知る、地獄は現に在り因果を信ふべし（省略）[117].

"We learn truly that hell exists in reality" 誠に知る、地獄は現に在り is the interpretation offered for this event by Kyōkai. Thus crossing the boundary between this world and that is not at all limited to a geographical or spiritual journey. Not only is there a liminal state in which the body may experience the other world, or the spirit may experience the other world without the body becoming uninhabitable; but also there is a

[116] Ibid. p168
[117] Ibid. p77

liminal, ambiguous quality in the boundary between presentations of the geographical and psychological realities of the afterworld. The logic of preparing for rebirth in the Pure Land by a formula is correctly understood to have its roots in the fundamental Buddhist notion that rebirth depends greatly on the state of mind at the point of death. Yet, the *Nihon Ryōiki* presents us with a level of physicality which is far from the rather clinical and psychological world of the Abhidhamma. It is surely the former which is of relevance to an understanding of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. Yet, given the inclusion of Daoist tropes and cosmological variety, few would fail to place this work and its presentation of the physicality of salvation and damnation in the broadest context.

Another key overall influence is the "immediate reward"/ "immediate punishment" that pervades the *Nihon Ryōiki*. Beyond any cosmological consideration, this hortatory message takes precedence. The body and the immediate experiences it can provide are the natural focus for this. This is the context in which it has direct crossover with the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. The sure and certain karmic connection between one's deeds and their results, as a key hortatory theme in Buddhist hagiography, is a background principle of *zuisō* 瑞相 in the *ōjōden*. By association, it is the logic at work behind the inclusion of demonstrable results for Kūkai's holy life even after death.

A final point in that regard concerns the *Nihon Ryōiki*'s explicit advocacy of intersectarian study. This collection of legends does not seem strictly edited for doctrinal content, but rather sees the value in the broad otherness of visions the various visions of the otherworld. In the Preface to Vol.1 Kyōkai criticises those who don't respect both the Buddhist and Confucian literature:

「然れどもすなはち外を学ぶる者は仏の法を誹り、ないを読む者は外典

を軽す。愚癡なる類は迷執を懐き罪福を信はず[118]。」

Thus, from the earliest time point in our survey, we are presented with an ancient Japanese Buddhist hagiographer far more interested in the full range of traditions available within the Japanese archipelago than many of his modern readers. We may trace, then, the presence of bodily demonstrations of spiritual states and post-mortem fates, ambiguity in post-mortem locations and a general theme of the coexistence and interaction of various teachings of the holy life from within and without the Buddhist mainstream to this earliest stage. It will be taken up again in following sections.

In addition to the above consideration of the *Nihon Ryōiki*-a work in which Pure Land rebirth is little developed as the standard goal set as the hortatory goal of hagiography, it is also important to recognize that the principle of bodily proof of post-mortem destination present in Japanese Buddhist *ōjōden* hagiography even at this early stage. This was in the *Tenjiku ōjōki* 天竺往生記[119], in which we find the principle of *genshin ōjō* 現身往生. The Record of Birth in the Pure Land in India (*Tenjiku Ōjōki*) is dated to the Fourteenth year of Enryaku (795), and was supposedly carried by Śrāmana Saichō, returning home after entering China. It is indeed an ancient text with colophon by no less a figure than Saichō, which tells us (though some parts are not extant) that those among them who achieved Birth in this very body *genshin ōjō* numbered thirteen. This work differs from the *Nihon Ryōiki* in that it is a specifically *ōjō* based hagiographical work. Yet the international theme and accounts of physical salvation comparable to that of Daoist immortals are points are aspects both works have in common.

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[118] Ibid. p3

[119] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介 (Eds.) *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 7 *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生伝・法華験記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p281

The concept of bodily enlightenment has been explored in previous research on the concept of *genshin ōjō*. Mark Blum has argued that the examples of *genshin ōjō* (1st, 2nd, 4th tales) in the *Tenjiku ōjō kenki* resemble the Daoist immortals in their disappearances and flyings off into the sky[120]. In the first, second, and fourth biographies, the individual attains Birth without dying, although only in the second biography is this specifically referred to as *genshin ōjō*. Blum even suggests there is clearly some overlap of *genshin ōjō* with the terms *sokushin ōjō* 即身往生 and *sokutoku ōjō* 即得往生, which occur in Kamakura-period Pure Land doctrinal exegesis[121]. We will return to this theme in the discussion below of the context for the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the time of Oe no Masafusa and show that pure land concepts of rebirth in this body were current in the periods before, contemporary to and later than the *Gonryū engi*.

This section has established the presence of physicality in salvation or otherwise as a key theme in early Heian Buddhist hagiography. Taken with the following two sections in this chapter, we can trace a line from the ancient period works with Daoist style and monistic portrayals of salvation and damnation to the late 10th century and the onset of *mappō* thought.

In this section we have seen a broad and inclusive approach to salvation presented within the most influential Buddhist hagiography in the period prior not only to the *nyūjōsetsu*, but to the *nyūjō* itself. The thread of concern with the body and its vicissitudes which runs throughout Buddhism and can be identified as a key theme of hagiography from the *Nihon Ryōiki* to Genshin's time can also be traced, for example, in works relating directly to Kūkai.

[120] Blum M. 'Biography as Scripture, Ōjōden in India, China, and Japan' Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 34/2 p341

[121] Blum M. 'Biography as Scripture, Ōjōden in India, China, and Japan' Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 34/2 p337

Chapter 2, Section 2

Pure Land Thought and the Legend of the Eternal Meditation of Kūkai

This section concerns a legend very familiar to all scholars of Japanese religion. I hope that the case I will make for a re-reading of key texts free of sectarian constraint will be of wider interest within the field of the history of religions. The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai, involving the discovery of his warm and incorrupt body, is important to the development of Kōbō Daishi related beliefs and practices. This section offers a reassessment of the source materials for this legend from a history of ideas perspective. It seeks to demonstrate that this legend, first found in material written well over a century after Kūkai's death in 835ce, draws heavily on the key ideas and form of Pure Land hagiography typical of the late 10th and 11th centuries.

The legend seems to have emerged in the 10th century against a background of efforts to restore Mt Kōya after a period of decline and disuse. The notion of incorruptibility as a sign of holy and auspicious death, while fully compatible with Shingon thought, was typical of the Pure Land hagiography of that time. I will introduce materials from the *ōjōden* collections of late-Heian period Pure Land hagiography which are highly comparable with the Kūkai texts. Considering the significance of Pure Land hagiography at that time, and the use by monks from the esoteric traditions of Pure Land practices for the dying, the question of the extent of Pure Land influence would seem a valid focus for reassessment of the existing scholarship on the legend. However, this influence has been generally overlooked in the light of the legend's later significance in the Shingon sect and for the "*sokushinbutsu*" practitioners who attempted to achieve buddhahood through a process of self-mummification. There has also, it would seem,

been a reticence perhaps in drawing attention to Pure Land influence on the legend of Kūkai, revered founder of the Japanese Shingon sect.

Past research on this area, particularly that of Matsumoto and his colleagues, has looked at the legend of Kūkai's eternal meditation and considered the numerous influences that may have contributed to its formation. These include the evident interest of Kūkai and those around him in Maitreya faith, the possibility of Kūkai having practiced fasting and other techniques possibly of a Taoist nature prior to his death, the possible influence of other legendary archetypes from Japan and the continent and to a limited extent the influence of Pure Land thought per se. The *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* (金剛峰寺建立修行縁起 968c.e.) has been recognised as the earliest[122] text containing the legend of the incorruptibility of Kūkai (d.835c.e).This text and its content provided the basis for later material on the legend in which others visit the apparently lifelike Kūkai at the Okunoin. Similarities between aspects of this text and texts by related authors such as Oe Masafusa have been pointed out previously, but a more general comparison of the *ōjōden* accounts of *zuisō* in various forms of post mortem preservation and key Kūkai texts has not yet been attempted. This section is an attempt to provide that general comparison and thereby demonstrate the connection between the two.

The key works on thelegend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai have been done by Murakami Hiroko 村上弘子 and Matsumoto Shō 松本昭. These works, in conjunction with a recent work by Shirai Yūko 白井優子 and sections of works on the history of the *sokushinbutsu*, represent a complete survey of the historical materials relating to the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. Their primary focus, however, is on describing the relation of legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai materials to one another in order

[122] Naitō Masatoshi 内藤正敏 *Nihon no Miira Shinkō* 日本のミイラ信仰, Kyoto: Hōzōkan 1999 p36

to identify the origins of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and the content present at different stages in its development. The early legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai material key to this paper, the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* 金剛峰寺建立修行縁起, is analysed at length by Matsumoto[123]. The main theory he proposes for the main influence on the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai is the vita of Zhiyi (Tendai Chija Daishi Shaku Chigi 天台智者大師釈智顗) in The Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks (Zoku kōsō den 続高僧伝) which has noticeable similarities[124]. Shirai has pointed to another possible influence on the formation of the Kūkai legend from the legend of the Hossō monk Gyōgi 行基 included in the Nihon Ryōiki[125]. Not dismissing either of these two prior theories, this paper makes a stronger argument for the influence of pure land thought and the pure land tradition of death and dying, introduced only briefly by Shirai[126].

The methodological perspective of this section draws on the "genealogical method" popularized by the likes of Michel Foucault and applied to the study of religions by scholars such as Talal Asad[127]. This methodology treats the reception and establishment of narratives not as isolated ideas, but as part of a socio-cultural context which they in turn contribute to transform. This work has at its theoretical heart the key principles which have informed Biblical form criticism as founded by scholars such as Bultmann and Dibelius. Those principles are that "behind a form there lies a purpose", and that

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123 Matsumoto Shō 松本昭 *Kōbō Daishi Nyūjōsetsu no Kenkyū* 弘法大師入定説の研究, Vol.22. Tokyo: Rokkō Shuppan 1982 p219ff

124 Ibid. p239ff

125 Shirai Yūko 白井優子 *Kūkai Densetsu no Keisei to Kōyasan-nyūjōdensetsu no Keiseito Kōyasan Nōkotsu no Hasshō* 空海伝説の形成と高野山―入定伝説の形成と高野山納骨の発生 Dōseisha Tokyo: 1986 p82ff

126 Ibid. p124-128

127 Asad, T. Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1993

there is a “Sitz im Leben” to which that purpose relates. The purpose is to present Kūkai as a holy person transcending the bonds and *zaishō* of this world. The Sitz im Leben is the need to revitalize Kōyasan, and draw attention to the outstanding holiness and even uniqueness of Kūkai. The wider context for these two factors was the crisis posed to the Buddhists in the age of the declining dharma (*mappō* 末法), which gave rise to a set of ideals best expressed in the works of Genshin and *ōjōden* compilers. We shall see that the the overall context for these various aspects was a very broad one by no means at odds with or exclusive of the Shingon and Tendai esoteric traditions, and conclude that the validity and impact of those concerns was a factor in the early form of the legend of Kūkai’s eternal meditation, as it was in the Kōbō daishi as savior faith which developed in later centuries.

I do not wish to argue that the *ōjōden* as they exist now as extant works were the formative influence on the legend of Kūkai’s eternal meditation. There is a gap of some seventeen years between the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* 金剛峰寺建立修行縁起 of 968 and the earliest of the *ōjōden* (985). I suggest that the formal hagiographic pattern relating to the ending of the lives of holy men and (some) women that the *ōjōden* texts embody, based in a tradition far broader than the legend of the eternal mediation of Kūkai, influenced that legend. During this time the stories must have circulated independently before being gradually collected. Behind this Pure Land hagiographic form lies the concept of an ideal religious death held by key thinkers at that time. Two aspects contributed to the ideal; the first relates to practices before death including ablutions, withdrawal to a special chamber, sitting in the lotus or half-lotus position and forming mudras, and the chanting of mantras especially the *nenbutsu*. The second involves *zuisō*, or auspicious signs that rebirth in the Pure Land had been achieved. *Zuisō* include

wonderful fragrances, the body remaining in a sitting posture, heavenly music or light, and most significantly for this study the body remaining in various ways incorrupt after death. Both of these aspects were thought essential or typical parts of the leaving of this world for the Pure Land.

As Abe and Stone have recently pointed out, the religious milieu of which the Heian *ōjōden* are a part did not reflect the clear cut modern distinctions between sects on grounds of doctrine[128]. Within these hagiographies Shingon monks practice the Pure Land way of dying and Pure Land devotees study the esoteric teachings. As a range of material suggests, Kūkai was interested in the Maitreya faith and perhaps he actually aimed for rebirth in Tusita. However, the nature of Pure Land practice at that time was different in many ways to the Heian Pure Land hagiography I argue influenced the legend of Kūkai's eternal meditation. Also, due to a high degree of inconsistency in the source materials there can be no certainty about the actual circumstances of Kūkai's last days and funeral. A great deal of research has been done on Kūkai's last days and I will not attempt to introduce the differing scholarly perspectives here. However, there is a consensus that Kūkai was cremated in accord with Buddhist practice. The earliest extant source material for Kūkai remaining in a life-like state within the Okunoin inner sanctuary of Mt Kōya is the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* 金剛峰寺建立修行縁起, written by the Tōji monk Ningai in 968, 133 years after Kūkai's death. The background to this material is the efforts to restore Mt Kōya at that time, amid which Ningai was persuading Fujiwara Michinaga to visit the mountain. I will paraphrase a part of that material here:

[128] Abe Ryūichi 阿部龍一, *Mikkyō Girei to Kenmitsu Bukkyō-Myōeibō Kōben no Nyūmetsu Girei wo Megutte*, Ed. Kongo Masaharu 今五雅晴 *Chūsei Bukkyō no Tenkai to sono Kiban* 中世仏教の展開とその基盤 Tokyo: Ōkura Shuppan 2002, (Ed.) Cuevas, B, Stone, J 2007 The Buddhist Dead Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press p141, 151, 158

則義（承和）ニ年乙卯三月廿一日寅時。結加跌坐。結大日定印。奄然入定。兼日十日四時行法。其間御弟子共唱彌勒宝号。唯以閉目无言語為入定。自余如生身。于時生年六十二。夏臘四十一。雖然如世人不喪送。而厳然安置。則准法及七々御忌。御(弟)子等併以拝見。顔色不襄。髻髪更長。因之加剃除整衣裳。畳石壇例人可出入許。其上仰石匠安五輪率都婆。入種々梵本陀羅尼。其上更亦建立宝塔。安置仏合利（ママ）。[129]

(It was) at the hour of the tiger on the 21st day of the third month in the second year of Jōwa, the superior year of the hare. (He sat in) the lotus position. (He formed) the *jōin* mudra of Mahavairocana. With a gasp he entered into meditative stillness. That same day and for ten days following he performed four hours of Buddhist rites. At these times his disciples chanted the treasured dharma mantra of Maitreya. (Then), only by closing his eyes, not uttering a word, he entered into meditative stillness. In all other aspects his body was as living. At that time he was 62 years of age…..There was no public mourning. The orders were to leave (the body) where it was for the time being. Then came the occasion of the 49th day memorial rite. The disciples and others looked in prayerfully upon the body. The color of the face was unchanged. The hair and beard had grown. They shaved him and tidied his robes…..They raised a five tiered stupa…and enshrined the Buddha relics.

The preparations for death and the peacefulness of the passing are key aspects of the way of dying found in the *ōjōden*. Leaving the body in a mortuary chamber for a period

[129] Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai 續群書類従完成會 *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū* 續群書類従 Vol. 28, Book 1. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai 1902 p286 Nagatani Hōshū 長谷宝秀 *Kōbō Daishi Den Zenshū* 弘法大師伝全集 Vol. 1 Pitaka 1977 p53-55

(a practice usually known as *mogari*) before cremation or burial allowed for the *zuisō* of incorruptibility to manifest themselves. The unchanged face, the grown hair and the manner of entombment are all typical contents of the *ōjōden* hagiographies. None of points are found in the 9th century accounts of Kūkai's death. This is entirely new content appearing 133 years after Kūkai's death. For comparison here are two accounts of the deaths of holy people from the *ōjōden* which have similar content. The first is from the *Honchō Shinshu ōjōden* 本朝新修往生伝 1

命終ノ[之]時、仏ニ向ヒ端坐シ、手ニ〔定〕印ヲ〔結ヒ〕、弥陀ヲ称念ス。瑞雲天ニ従キ、異香室ニ薫ス。没後数日アリテ、身燭壊セズ。結跏趺坐シ、定ニ入ル人ノ如シ。

On approaching the end, he faced the Buddha (statue) sitting cross-legged, wove the *jōin* mudra with his hands and fixed his mind on Amida through chanting (that is, chanting the name of Amida). An auspicious cloud climbing to heaven, the room filled with a wonderful aroma. Several days after death, the body was not corrupt. (It was) sitting in the lotus position, like one in meditative stillness.

The second is from the *Shūi ōjōden* 拾遺往生伝 上１６

上人歓喜シテ、希有ノ心ヲ成て[以〕多宝塔ニ安ムシテ、十種ノ供養ヲ致朝ニ来リ墓ニ往キテ、去留定マラ不。[干]雲嶺従キ、聖人窓ヲ去ル[之]暁ニ当リテ、常ニ随フ僧一人、僅ニ其ノ傍ニ在リ。是ノ時香気室ニ薫シ、音楽天ニ聞ユ。上人口ニ弥陀ヲ唱ヘ、手ニ定印ヲ結ヒテ、身心動カ不、端坐シテ入滅セリ。数日ヲ経タリト縫モ、臭気有ルコト無シ。結跏旧ノ如クニシテ、容顔変セ不。道俗来リ集ヒ

テ、礼拝鳴咽ス。

At that time a fragrant air spread through the room, and a music was heard in the heavens. The venerable one chanted Amida with his mouth and wove the *jōin* mudra with his hands; body and mind unmoving he entered into extinction while sitting upright. Even after several days had passed there was no smell. The cross-legged position was just as before, the countenance unchanged. Both lay and religious gathered and cried out in worship.

Of course, not all the hundreds of hagiographies in the *ōjōden* contain this type of *zuisō*. In the course of my research into the Heian *ōjōden* I have identified 8 accounts in which the holy person's body remains incorrupt for a long time, 3 in which *zuisō* manifest on the holy person's whole body, 7 in which the holy person's countenance and expression remains unchanged after death, 6 in which the holy person's facial colour and other aspects remains unchanged after death and 2 in which a wonderful scent accompanies a holy person's death[130].

[130] We can identify a range of material relating to various aspects of incorruptibility and heavenly purity of the bodies of deceased holy people within the Heian Ōjōden. Material in which the holy person's body remains incorrupt for a long time can be found at:
後拾遺往生伝１７，続本朝往生伝１３，元亨釈書和解１６，元亨釈書１１，拾遺往生伝上１１，拾遺往生伝上１６，拾遺往生伝上１６，本朝新修往生伝２３. Material in which *zuisō* manifest on the holy person's whole body can be found at: 後拾遺往生伝上７，後拾遺往生伝下２５，三外往生記２８. Material in which the holy person's countenance remains unchanged after death can be found at: 後拾遺往生伝中２２，後拾遺往生伝下１３，後拾遺往生伝上１８，後拾遺往生伝下４，後拾遺往生伝下１三外往生記５５，後拾遺往生伝上１. Material in which the color of the holy person's countenance remains unchanged after death can be found at 後拾遺往生伝下１７，本朝往生極楽記３３，後拾遺往生伝上１３，後拾遺往生伝中３０，後拾遺往生伝下２７，後拾遺往生伝中２２
Material in which a wonderful scent accompanies a holy person's death can be found at: 『後拾遺往生伝』中２０,『後拾遺往生伝』中２９

A reason for the crossover in content is, I believe, the close associations of the authors of *ōjōden* and the legend of Kūkai's eternal meditation. The deepest of these lies with Masafusa 1041-1111, a key author of Heian *ōjōden*, who also wrote the key Kūkai texts *Kōbō Daishisan* 弘法大師讃, *Honchō Shinsenden* 本朝神仙伝 and *Daishi Sokushinbutsudan* 大師即身仏譚. It is interesting that although the *ōjōden* do include accounts of Kūkai's life, they give no detail regarding his death despite the manner of death being of paramount importance within the *ōjōden*. It seems reasonable to assume, considering the authorship of the *ōjōden* and Kūkai material, that the compilers were aware of the existence of appropriate accounts of the last days and enshrinement of Perhaps it would be going too far to imagine that this actually explains the absence from the *ōjōden* proper of a Kūkai death narrative. Though this section must be limited to the earliest text, the legend of Kūkai's eternal meditation continued to develop over time with the tales of the various people who entered the Okunoin to discover his lifelike body. The key texts all bear the same hallmarks as the *kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*. Sano and Naitō's works of some 45 years ago pointed out that some of the early Kūkai material contains lines describing the post-mortem state of Kūkai in identical terms to *ōjōden* accounts of monks who attained Pure Land rebirth. For example, the *Honchō Shinsenden* has "later, he entered into adamantine meditation and is ever more thus. His hair and beard appear as if (he were) ordinarily living. His countenance is unchanged. 「後、金剛定ニ入リ今ニ存ス。初人皆鬢髪常ニ生ウルヲ見ル。形容変ラズ。」. The 大師御行状集 has "He was as if alive…the color of his face unchanged"「自余ハサナガラ行く生身ノ如シ。」や「顔色変ラズ」はで表記されている[131]。

[131] Sano Fumiya 佐野文哉 and Naitō Masatoshi 内藤正敏 *Nihon no Sokushinbutsu* 日本の即身仏 Tokyo: Kōfūsha Shoten, 1969 from p44. This work comments on the stories of monks' bodies not decomposing in the *ōjōden* being similar to the general principle of the legend of Kōbō Daishi's body not decomposing.

These scholars did not go so far as to suggest that the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai as a whole or its content was a product of pure land influence, but recognised that some key phrases are identical. Looking at the legend as a whole, however, I have found that the new content, bearing the hallmark of pure land hagiography, could not realistically be so similar merely by accident of style. Rather, all this material reflects the Pure Land hagiographic ideal of the late 10th century and 11th century Japan.

I have paraphrased the term *nyūjō* as "enter into meditative stillness", a poor translation which loses the nuance of "cease to live". The most straightforward meaning of the term is "enter into meditation". However, where it is not used euphemistically, it may mean to enter into meditation so as to continue living in an entirely withdrawn semi-lifelike state, or to enter meditation at the point of death. The term *nyūjō* is a problematic one. Over the years it has come to be synonymous with the death of a monk, particularly a monk from the Shingon lineages. It is unclear how far this term can be traced back through Buddhist history. Further research is needed to establish or rule out any connection with *Nirodhasamãapatti*, which seems to refer to a type of nirvana that can be entered temporarily. This state must be something like that of Mahã-Kãśyapa who was said to be buried in the womb of Mount Kukkutãpada waiting to pass the robe of the Buddha on to Maitreya. This type of content is closer to the "purely" Shingon doctrine of *sokushinjōbutsu*, in which one attains buddhahood in this very body. It is not of Pure Land origin. For our purposes however it will suffice to acknowledge the complications and note that the term is used regularly in the Heian *ōjōden* material.

Another problem which has been suggested to me is that it might be the case that rather than the *ōjōden* material having influenced the legend of Kūkai's eternal meditation, the reverse might be true. This is demonstrably true to a certain extent, as the incorruption

after death of certain late ancient Kōya monks is included in the *ōjōden*. Matsumoto and others have suggested that these monks may have wished to be preserved after death or were recorded as having been so in emulation of Kūkai. However, the fact that incorruption does not appear in the Kūkai material until it appears in a form so similar to the *ōjōden* confirms to me that the influence was far more likely to have been exerted from Pure Land thought and hagiography onto the Kūkai legend. This seems close to certain when we consider the number of incorruption related *zuisō* in the *ōjōden* and the fact that *zuisō* as an aspect of the ideal Pure Land death existed on the continent for a considerable time before it came to Japan. The notion that this important feature of contemporary hagiography was applied to Kūkai is, I believe, demonstrated by the pre and post mortem aspects (chanting, withdrawal, *zuisō*) of the ideal Pure Land holy death being present in the earliest texts and in similar format to the *ōjōden* hagiographies.

This material shows, I would argue, that as *Kōya* opened up into its role as a Pure Land on this earth and began to attract the patronage and faith of the great and then the many, there was a need to appeal to the faithful in recognisable and accessible ways. In the early material we have looked at today we see perhaps the very first steps toward the growing appeal of the Kūkai legend to the world at large, as Kūkai begins his career as a focus for faith and a saint *in praesentia* throughout Japan, and with it an ever closer association with Pure Land thought.

Among the various theories for the development of the Kūkai legend is the notion that it was adapted from tales of great monks retreating to caves in the Japanese and Chinese traditions. This may be the case, though providing evidence for it is difficult. The eternal meditation of Kūkai legend may also have developed as an extrapolation from the *zuisō* of lifelikeness in Pure Land hagiography. No matter what the origin of the legend itself

may be, the aspects of it which resemble *zuisō*, and these are the key aspects, are of such similarity to the *ōjōden* traditions that the influence of the *ōjōden* on the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai should be assumed. That is the conclusion I commend to you here.

In the paragraphs above I have highlighted the similarities between two types of document which have previously been understood as related to separate traditions and therefore largely unrelated to each other. One conclusion I draw is that this material, being similar, shows an area of crossover at an early point between two traditions that came to be viewed as separate and distinct in modern times.

Kūkai's own salvation and sainthood had been the topic of the hagiography thus far. It was the increasing significance of Kūkai's eternal presence on Kōyasan as a means to save others that provided the impetus for Kōyasan's restoration and rise to preeminence. We may understand the aspects of "Pure Land literature of proof" in the late tenth century as the groundwork for all future Kūkai faith. On these was built the infra-structure of legends, in which Kūkai's own role as a holy being who could lead people to salvation made him ever more immanent and active at the popular level. This went hand in hand with the practice of depositing the bones of the deceased *nōkotsu* 納骨 on Kōyasan and *hijiri* 聖 that allowed access to Kōyasan to burgeoning numbers throughout wide sections of society and the country. Shirai believes that as the campaign for financial support spread to the capital, especially with the leading Tōji 東寺 monk Ningai 仁海, the image of Kūkai as esoteric master showing such powers as his mastery of the brush was eclipsed was eclipsed by that of the eternal meditation[132]. According to Matsunaga,

[132] Shirai Yūko 白井優子 *Kūkai Densetsu no Keisei to Kōyasan-Nyūjōdensetsu no Keiseito Kōyasan Nōkotsu no Hasshō* 空海伝説の形成と高野山―入定伝説の形成と高野山納骨の発生 Dōseisha Tokyo: 1986 p133, Shirai Yūko 白井優子、*Amesōzu Ninkai to Kūkai Nyūjōdensetsu* 雨僧正仁海と空

Kūkai's nephew Shinnen (or Shinzen 眞然, 804-91) proposed the idea that Mount Kōya was a Buddhist Pure Land and in 883, convinced Emperor Yōzei 陽成 (869-949) that the main temple there, Kongōbu-ji 金剛峰寺, was a place of ancient manifestations (*kojaku* 古迹) of the Buddhas[133]. However, a series of fires, and seizure of lands and funds by the Kii governor in the 900s led to the abandonment of Kōyasan by the remaining monks[134]. At the beginning of the 11th century Kōyasan was still in a state of existential crisis.

For the purposes of this paper, it is very important to recognize that though the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* describes the appearance of Kūkai's incorrupt body, it does not mention that the body of Kūkai was remained in that state perpetually. The commonplace understanding of the legend of Kūkai's incorruptibility, that it was a demonstration of *sokushin jōbutsu*-that is, the achievement of an incorruptible adamantine body, seems less relevant to this initial stage than the *ōjōden* genre in which it was a commonplace. This content came significantly later, representing a more developed legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai.

The earliest extant material which expresses this content is the *Seiji Yōryaku* 政事要略, completed in 1004, nearly 40 years after the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*. In Vol. 22, in the section on the year's events covering events in the eighth month (*Nenjūgyōji* 年中行事 Hachigatsu, Ue 八月上, *Goryōe* 御霊会) there is the following passage: "After the great teacher entered into extinction, his body was incorrupt. Even now he abides on Mt. Kōya. This is an extraordinary thing." 大師入滅之後。其身不乱壊。猶在高野。希代

海入定伝説 in Nihon Bukkyō 日本仏教 No.41 p50-68

[133] Matsunaga Yūkei 松長有慶 *Kūkai: Mugen wo Ikiru* 空海: 無限を生きる Tokyo: Shūeisha 1985 p196

[134] Matsunaga Yūkei 松長有慶 *Kōyasan: sono Rekishi to Bunka* 高野山：その歴史と文化 Kyoto: Hozokan 1984 p171-173, Weinstein, S. "Aristocratic Buddhism", Shively, D. Hall, J. McCullough W. 'The Cambridge History of Japan', 第 2 巻, Cambridge University Press, 1999 p504

之事也[135]. Naitō 内藤 has identified this as "the first time that discussion appears of Kūkai in some mummy-like state on Mt. Kōya"[136]. This material is somewhat ambiguous, but it is clearly the case that the ongoing presence of Kūkai's incorrupt body on Mt. Kōya many years after a body would naturally have decomposed is first found at this point. We may infer that the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*, written 150 years after the death of Kūkai, could well have included a version of the discovery of the incorrupt body which abided permanently on Mt. Kōya if it were simply a matter of including the most impressive story regardless of any other cultural or religious consideration. Rather, the form and content of the pure land way of death was chosen, specifically. Why were these terms the ones in which the special holiness of Kūkai came to be couched in the 10th and 11th centuries? Why did they so successfully attract pilgrimages from the likes of Michinaga and contribute to the increasing recognition of Kūkai both at state and more popular levels?

To confirm the validity of the notion of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai having arisen from a Pure Land hagiographic context, we need to ask the question of why was it that the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai arose from a Pure Land hagiographic context. In section one we have observed similarities in form and content, in section two we will focus on some of the intellectual historical tropes which converge in such a way as to form the Pure Land hagiographic context of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. Why was this genre the one which provided the content and form necessary to express Kūkai's sacredness in the late 10th century?

The purpose of the following set of discussions is to introduce, in brief, some key

[135] Koroita Katsumi 黒板勝美 *Seiji Yōryaku* 政事要略 Kokushi Taikei 國史大系 Vol.28 Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan 2000 (first printed 1935) *Seiji Yōryaku* 政事要略 No. 22 p6

[136] Naitō Masatoshi 内藤正敏 *Nihon no Miira Shinkō* 日本のミイラ信仰 Kyoto: Hōzōkan 1999 p37

observations regarding the genealogy of the concepts regarding the body at and after death, especially salvation and damnation in the body, which relate to the use of the *ōjōden* form for the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the 10th century. The first part of the second section introduces the contemporary context of these ideas in relation to key movements within late 10th century Japanese Buddhism. The second and third parts trace the lineage of these key concepts in the periods immediately preceding and following the late 10th/early 11th century period which was our initial focus.

Firstly, let us consider the purposes ascribed to the *ōjōden* hagiographic genre. Recent years have seen an increased interest in the genre, particularly among western scholars. The theorist Mark Blum has traced the genre of *ōjōden* from the Indian *adbhutadharma,* labelling it as "Biography as Scripture"[137]. This genre, with its narrative focus on the moments before and after death, could be returned to again and again as an act of religious devotion, instruction and contemplation. Michael Bathgate, has stated that the purpose of the genre is "to form rather than inform"[138], stressing the moral didacticism of the texts and the ideals they present. These are the values that allow for the re-representation of the approaching of the end (*rinjū* 臨終) of Kūkai according to the prevailing patterns of the late 10th century.

Allik draws on the ideas put forward by Michel Foucault, describing *ōjōden* stories as a form of self-writing that also constitutes a technique for self-transformation. He highlights the benefits that might accrue to the writer, such as the internalization of the narrative model appropriate for a true *ōjōnin*[139]. This factor seems likely considering the

[137] Blum M. 'Biography as Scripture, Ōjōden in India, China, and Japan' Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 34/2 p329

[138] Bathgate, M. Exemplary Lives: Form and Function in Pure Land Sacred Biography, Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 34/2: p271–303

[139] Allik, A. Setsuwa and Self Writing: Witnessing Death in Hosshinshū, Japanese Studies, 32:1, p97-112

fact that *ōjōden* accounts include re-writes of tales which, to some extent similar to vitae of Kūkai, were already known and published. Ningai's work on the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* could easily be considered to have these goals in mind. Whether or not one wishes to consider the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* to have been Kūkai's *ōjōden* per se, few indeed would find it hard to imagine that the model of Kūkai's death was meaningful to Ningai personally and for devotion within Shingon circles outward. The writing and the recording thereof was thus a meaningful religious practice for the writer as well as a religious tool for the enlightenment of others. A further aim of *ōjōden* writers was the forming of *kechien* with the *ōjōnin*, clearly something that would appeal to any Shingon monk with regard to Kūkai. This was the religious milieu of the *ōjōden*, and given these motivations, the similarities examined in section one seem all the more natural.

We know that these were the aims of *ōjōden* writers because they specifically tell us so. The preface to the *Nihon ōjō gokurakuki* 日本往生極楽記 (前書き) states: "One never fails to form a karmic connection (*kechien* 結縁) with those men and women, religious and lay, who aspire to Sukhāvatī and beg for pure land rebirth" 道俗男女の、極楽に志あり、往生を願ふことある者には、結縁せざることなし[140]. Similarly, the author of the *Shūi ōjōden* gives pride of place to such karmic considerations noting that his accounts are "moreover, not written for fame or for profit. They are written simply for the purpose of karmic connections (*kechien* 結縁) and the encouragement of Buddhist practice" 更に名聞のため利養のためにして記せず、ただ結縁のため勧進のためにして記す.[141]

[140] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞, annotations by Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介, *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生傳、法華驗記 Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p11
[141] Ibid. p280

A further aspect of the reasons why there were renewed efforts in hortatory literature, and these were taking a Pure Land turn, was the perceived onset of an age in which man's own ability in this world to achieve enlightenment was ever more limited. As part of the explanation of the successful use of Pure Land forms in the legend of the eternal meditation of Kukai, the rise of Pure Land thought in the age of the declining law as represented by the likes of Yasutane's associate Genshin is significant. It is important that the *Ōjōyōshū*, the seminal work on attaining to the Pure Land, and the foundational text of the special death of the Shingon patriarch Kūkai was formed at almost precisely the same time, 985 and 986 respectively. However, clear indication of what the connection was has gone little further than the observation that the Shingon patriarch Kūkai's interest in Maitreya and the Tendai no Genshin's interest in Pure Land rebirth particularly in the Amida faith form part of the intellectual milieu formed by declining law thought.

The notion of the age of the declining law forced a change in concepts of the kind of liberation that men may achieve, given the increased limitations of the age. Rebirth in the Pure Land was, of course, the goal prescribed in the *Ōjōyōshū*. This goal gained ever increasing popularity across sects and social classes in the years and centuries which followed. The increased doubt in the possibility of access to liberation may partly explain the rise in literature which demonstrates ideal Buddhist deaths through bodily signs of post mortem purity and incorruption.

Returning to the concept of bodily incorruption as a sign of the holy death which we saw in a Nara period context in the *Ryōiki*, the tone for this concept in the Heian period was undoubtedly set by Genshin. Genshin devotes large sections of the "*Ōjōyōshū* to the concept of *onri edo* 厭離穢土 *gongu jōdo* 欣求浄土". Important to the thread of

influence we are tracing is the fact that these sections express the purity of the pure land and the pollution of *edo* in largely physical terms. Jewels, flowers and bodily perfection is the reward of he who attains to the Pure Land, while the corruption that marks *edo* will be matched by the corruption of the body, the person.

Genshin begins his magnum opus with an exposition of the impurity of the body.

Ōjōyōshū 往生要集

いはんやまた命終の後は、塚の間に損捨すれば、一二日乃至七日を経るに、その身膨れ脹れ、色は青瘀に変じて、臭く爛れ、皮は穿けて、膿血流れ出づ。鷲。。。狗等、種々の禽獣、揑み掣いて食ひ噉む。禽獣食ひ已りて、不浄潰れ爛るれば、無量種の虫蛆ありて、臭き処に雑はり出づ。悪むべきこと、死せる狗よりも過ぎたり。乃至、白骨と成り已れば、支節分散し、手足・髑髏、おのおの異る処にあり。風吹き、日曝し、雨灌ぎ、霜封み、積むこと歳年あれば、色相変異し、遂に腐れ朽ち、砕末となりて塵土と相和す。〈已上は究党の不浄なり。大般若・止観等に見ゆ〉

当に知るべし、この身は始終不浄なること。愛する所の男女も皆またかくの如し。誰か智ある者、更に楽著を生ぜん[142]。

In some sense, perhaps, Genshin's disgust with the ultimate fate of the body represents a concern for the wellbeing of that body which is at some level at odds with an entirely soul/body dualistic approach. For our purposes, however, we need only recognize it as a framework for increased need to see this situation demonstrably (physically) ameliorated

[142] Ishida Mizumaro 石田瑞麿 *Genshin* 源信 *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 Vol. 6 Iwanami 1970 p37

in hagiography. It is no accident, then, that this milestone in Pure Land thought is a close contemporary with the milestone in faith in and devotion to *Kōbō daishi* which the period 968 (*Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*) to 1004 (*Seiji Yōryaku*) represents. During this period the sacredness of Kūkai was for the first time expressed first on his body after death, and then eternally so. In a time of perceived decay of the dharma, and increased perceptions of the moral decay of Edo, Kūkai's transcendence thereof is expressed in terms of physical non-decay. That there is a difference between the theoretical principles behind not rotting in Pure Land and Shingon doctrine of the time is not the key point. The key point is, rather, that the principle of *onri edo* 厭離穢土 in the declining law had brought the two within the same soteriological and hagiographic framework.

Thus the themes of rotting as reward for sins and worldly evils which in the following part 2 of section 2 we will identified in the previous section's discussion of the Nihon Reiki are here more fully developed, and due in part to a consciousness of the declining law, more and more unavoidable. I would not suggest that the views expressed here "formed" the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai, rather, they gave rise to a hagiographic milieu in which a Shingon saint's holiness might best be expressed in the ways we have seen in the early paragraphs of this section. For indeed, these were the realities faced even by the holy man (*seijin* 聖人) who has reached the highest possible levels of religious development among men.

The following material, *The Covenant of 988* Genshin's revision of the Yasutane covenant is of particular interest as is reminds us that "even the saint" faces these realities and, though better off than the common man (*ni shi* 二死 means the qualitatively distinct deaths of the holy person-the advanced monk-and the ordinary human being) is in the end subject to physical dissolution, albeit by the purifying flame

of the raised pyre as opposed to natural decay via burial or the exposure at gates and elsewhere common at the time.

横川首楞嚴院二十五三昧起請

一可解兼占勝地名安養廟建立率都婆一基将為一結墓所事。右一生易過。凡夫常類芭蕉之露。二死難遁。聖人猶接栴檀之煙。樂盡而悲到。如風扇花散。栄去而衰来。似水濁玉昏。至于如夫骸臥露地鳥觜鑿眼。骨横煙村獣脣啄爛莫不行人流之心中一寸之凍忽碎。遊客之眼下兩行之泉乍流。魂縦雖籠花蔵之月身猶徒為蒿里之塵。仍兼占勝地建一率都婆[143]。

One lifetime soon passes. [The lifetime of] an ordinary man resembles dew on the leaf of the banana tree, and the two deaths are difficult to avoid. Even the holy man comes to sandalwood smoke. After ease and pleasure, sadness comes. As the wind fans the blossoms and scatters them, glory passes and decline comes; like water becoming muddied or a jewel growing dull. The way of things in the end as thus: corpses lie out on the dew soaked ground and birds pick out the eyes with their beaks. When smoking flank and bone is cast out in the villages, beasts devour the flesh with their teeth. None could pass by and not feel a sudden icy pang run through his heart. No traveler's eyes could fail to spring forth tears that fall like rain. Though spirits may be enveloped in the moon of the Lotus Womb, bodies are still in the dust of the grave. Thus let us choose an attractive site and erect a stupa there.

[143] Hieisan Senshuin, Hieisan Gakuin 比叡山専修院、叡山学院 (Eds.) *Eshin Sōzu Zenshū* 恵心僧都全集 Kyoto Sōbunkaku 5 Vols. 1971, Vol.1 p 346-347

In this material we may identify a concern for the body even of a saved spirit which is key to an understanding of this period and its religious products, including the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. The inevitable "way of all flesh" applies, even to the representative saint, as to ordinary believers in the age in which Genshin lived and worked: the age in which the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai emerged. It is thus no accident, then, that the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* talks almost precisely of the choosing of an attractive site and erect a single stupa (建一率都婆). In course, this attractive site (*shōchi* 勝地), Kōyasan, did indeed become a shared graveyard in the pure land Shingon tradition due to the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai as expressed in the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*.

We may also observe, as Bowring has suggested, that it is perhaps significant that the term *bōrei* 亡霊 is used elsewhere in this material[144]. I would interpret an aspect of ongoing connection with the previous life in the notion of a spirit (*rei* 霊). Thus ongoing karmic links with a group or a place, even when the soul *tama* 魂 has gone on to the Pure Land is implied by the term *bōrei* (that is, the dead spirit *of someone*) and then enhanced by the use of gravemarkers and recording in a *kakōcho* register. These aspects of the Genshin/*nijugosammaie* program have their cognates in the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in terms of ongoing spiritual presence rendering communication of the postmortem state of the departed possible, written elements and permanent monumentalization of the grave site.

Genshin's work gives a thorough and systematic presentation of moral status being reflected in the manner of death, which, as we have seen chapter 2 section 1, existed in a less developed form in the *Nihon Ryōiki* materials in the following. The following quote

[144] Ibid. p341, Bowring, R 'Preparing for the Pure Land in Late Tenth-Century Japan' in Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 1998 25/3-4 p247

clearly shows a link between a foul smelling body (*shūe no mi* 臭穢の身, *shūe* a term which appears in this context in the Buddhist scriptures[145], traceable to the Skt. daurgandha) and the defilements (Skt. kleśa *bonnō* 煩悩).

往生要集 巻上

かくの如き臭爛等の もろもろの不浄と同じく居る 罪の身は深く畏るべし これ即ちこれ怨家なり 識ることなくして耽り欲る人は 愚痴にして常に保護すれども かくの如き臭穢の身は 猶し朽ちたる城廓の如し 日夜に煩悩に逼られ 遷り流れて暫くも停ることなし[146]。

The notion of the effects of moral evil and goodness on the body at the point of death is developed with regard to the elements of earth, wind, fire and water is then presented.

往生要集 巻上

第一に、聖衆来迎の楽とは、およそ悪業の人の命尽くる時は、風・火まづ去るが故に動ぜんぎよういのちかんまん熱にして苦多し。善行の人の命尽くる時は、地・水まづ去るが故に緩鰻にして苦なし[147]。

Doctrine was thus extending its domain into the body as impurity *fujō* was interiorized and defilement took on the meaning of sinful karmic obstruction *zaishō,* as implied by Yokoi Kiyoshi 横井清 amongst others[148]. Defilement was nonetheless physical, as the

[145] See for example Yogâcārabhūmi-śāstra, (*Yugaron* 瑜伽論) T 1579.30.297b22
[146] Ishida Mizumaro 石田瑞麿 *Genshin* 源信 *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 Vol. 6 Iwanami 1970 p52
[147] Ibid.p53
[148] Yokoi Kiyoshi 横井清 *Chūsei Minshū no Seikatsu Bunka* 中世民衆の生活文化 Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai 1975 p275-276

disgust for dead bodies expressed in Genshin's works demonstrates. It was this world itself which, and though the *seijin* had a special death and might hope to "meet smoke from sandalwood", corruption of the body was in this period the surest sign of being in *edo* and kept there by *zaishō*. This is what the religious purity of Kūkai overcame in his 10th century hagiography.

It is tempting to understand his purity, perhaps, as extending to an overcoming of dimensional barriers between this world and the world of the buddhas, but perhaps this is a speculation too far. That the hagiographic representation of his purity in death crossed what are now, at least, sectarian barriers, was, nonetheless, the main argument of section 1 and this paper. In support of this claim, let us now present the relevant hagiographic materials showing Pure Land modes of holy death practiced by esoteric monks.

Inoue 井上 argues that aristocrats and others who joined the Pure land movement apparently thought of Pure Land practices as contemplative religious activity in tune with the ascetic spirit of the day, not simply the best way to ensure rebirth in the Pure Land after death[149]. Furthermore, the absence of effective difference between Kūkai's Maitreyism presented in the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* and the Amidism that was overtaking it in popularity is expressed in the following dictum from (Compiled by Fujiwara no Akihira 藤原明衡 in 893) the *Honchō Monzui* 本朝文粋 "Above is the way to Tusita, to the West dwells Amitabha" 上は兜率に行き、西は弥陀に遇はん. The practice of both (in this case, Tendai) esoteric Buddhism and amidism can be seen in the following tale:

[149] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 *Watakushi no Kodai Shigaku* わたくしの古代史学 Bungei Shunbun 1982 p131

日本往生極楽記　１９　明靖

延暦寺ノ僧明靖【請】ハ、俗姓藤原氏ナリ。素ヨリ密教ヲ嗜ミ、兼ネテ弥陀ヲ念ス、暮年ニ小病有リ。弟子ノ僧静真ヲ召シテ相ヒ語ラヒテ曰ハク、地獄ノ[之]火遠ク病ノ眼ニ現ス、念仏ノ[之]外誰カ敢ヘテ救ハム者カ。須ク自他共ニ念仏三昧ヲ〔修ス〕《須》シトイヒテ、[即]僧侶ヲ枕ノ前ニ請ヒテ、仏号ヲ唱ヘ令ム。又静真ニ語リテ曰ハク、眼前ノ［之］火漸クニ滅エ、西方ノ[之]月微ニ照ス。誠ニ是レ弥陀引接ノ[之]相ナリ[也]ト。命終ノ[之]日、強ニ微力ヲ扶ケ、沐浴シテ西ニ向ヒ気絶ユ〔[矣]〕。[150]

Examples, such as the following tale of a Enryakuji 延暦寺 esoteric monks can also be found of Pure Land and esoteric practices, culminating in an *ōjō* marked by the *zuisō* which are so key a feature common to the *ōjōden* and legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* onward.

日本往生極楽記　６　僧命

延暦寺ノ座主僧正ノ僧命ハ、左大史桑内ノ安岑カ子ナリ[也]。父母児无シ、祈リテ和尚ヲ生ム。和尚天性慈仁ニシテ、少キヨリ児ノ戯レ無カリキ。夢ニ梵僧有リ、来リテ摩頂シテ曰ハク、汝菩提心ヲ退クコト莫レトイヘリ。此クノ如キコト数ナリ[矣]。受戒ノ[之]後未タ曾ヨリ臥シ寝ネ《未》リキ。智証大師ニ就キ三部ノ大法ヲ受ク。和尚尊卑ヲ分タ不、客ノ来ルコト有レハ必ス迎ヘ送ル[之]。叡岳ノ嶺ノ上ニ、透【秀】メル巌舌ノ如クシテ、西塔ニ相ヒ向フ。智徳ノ[之]僧多ク[以]

[150] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞, annotations by Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介, *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生傳、法華驗記 Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p30

夭亡ス。古老ノ曰ハク、巌ノ妖ナリ[也]トイヘリ。和尚聞キテ[之]、巌ヲ望ミ歎息シ、三¬（１３オ）日祈念ス。一朝ニ雷電シ巌悉クニ破レ砕ケヌ。其ノ殞チタル片ノ石ハ今ニ路ノ傍ニ有リ。〔仁和寺ノ〕太上法皇、師ト為シ廻心戒ヲ受ケタマヘリ。戒壇ノ[之]上ニ紫金ノ光ヲ現ス。見ル者随喜ス。若シ病者有レハ、和尚ノ鉢ノ飯ヲ食サハ、其ノ苦患スル所痊愈セ不トイフコト莫シ。和尚俄ニ微キ病ニ有リ、一室ヲ酒掃キ、門弟子ニ告ケテ曰ハク、人トシテ生ケルコト限リ有リ。本尊我レヲ導キタマク。汝等近ク居ル可カラ不トイヘリ。今夜金光忽チニ照シ、紫雲自ラ聳キ、音楽空ニ遍ク、香気室ニ満ツ。和尚西方ヲ礼拝シ、〔阿〕弥陀仏ヲ念ス。香ヲ焼キ几ニ倚リ、眼ル如クシテ気止ム。斂葬ノ[之]間煙ノ中ニ芳気有リ。天子史ヲ遣シテ労（１３ウ）問シタマク。諡ヲ静観賜滅ヘリト[云云]。[151]

Both these works, from the *Nihon Ōjōgokurakuki* 日本往生極楽記 (985) are contemporary with the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*. There are other similar examples in Heian *ōjōden*, such as the tenth tale of the *Zoku Honchō Ōjōden* 続本朝往生伝 on Kakuchō 覚超[152]. This is proof positive that inclusion of esoteric monks in Pure Land hagiography was a normal practice at time of the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*, and demonstrates the very general validity of pure land Buddhist death practices at the time particularly as a primary hagiographic form. Let us now turn back to a less theoretically developed stage in Japanese Buddhist hagiography to gain a sense of the way in which the important role played by bodily proofs of post mortem statuses we have focused on so far had come to develop.

[151] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞, annotations by Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介, *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生傳、法華驗記 Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p21
[152] Ibid. p236

When we consider the following five points discussed in section two, an overall picture of the intellectual content and milieu of the earliest key aspects of the legend of the eternal eternal meditation of Kūkai becomes apparent. Firstly, we must recognize the particular concerns of "literature of proof" relating to the religious concerns pertinent especially to the age of the declining law as demonstrated by the cited works of Genshin and others contemporary to the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*. Secondly, this genre and this movement drew the involvement of key thinkers across perceived sectarian boundaries, as demonstrated by the cited works of Oe no Masafusa and other authors of *ōjōden* texts and hagiography in even broader traditions. This demonstrates the appropriateness of the genre to Kūkai hagiography at the time. Thirdly, we may confirm the popularity of the pure land death practices among the religious from Tendai and Shingon backgrounds. Fourthly, as we saw in the previous section, the existence of notions of achieving enlightenment in this very body was not limited to Tendai and Shingon concepts of *sokushin jōbutsu*. If we consider the various notions of pure land rebirth in this very body extant in the 10th century in conjunction with Masafusa's notions of immortals as living buddhas (discussed in the following section), we see a broad range of cognate notions reflecting the cultural milieu of literature of proof as represented by the *ōjōden* genre within which the eternal meditation legend was formed. Fifthly and finally, the pre-existence in Japan of this genre, and hagiography containing similar motifs, especially as demonstrated by the *Nihon Ryōiki* material cited, render the notion of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai having emerged as a direct result of a patterning after Chinese models as secondary, and perhaps even unnecessary given the level of resonance the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai has in its earliest forms with the prevalent Buddhist concerns and hagiographic forms of the time. Rather, both the legend of the

eternal meditation of Kūkai and the works which previous research as suggested as its models may be understood to be subsumed within a genre of Buddhist hagiography which, in its Japanese instantiation, was international, inter-generational and inter-sectarian in its scope.

Chapter 2, Section 3

Legends of Buddhist and Taoist immortals and the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai

This section is part of an ongoing project on *sokushinbutsu*, the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and the intellectual history of salvation and the incorruptible body. Its purpose is to add further detail to arguments made in the previous section. The previous section introduced an argument that the form and content of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai of the 10th and early 11th centuries reflects the influence of Pure Land hagiography typified in the Heian *ōjōden*. This section builds on that assertion by providing a broader conceptual context for this phenomenon, bringing in materials prior to and following the 10th and early 11th centuries. The thread of expressing sacredness or lack thereof in the body runs from before the point at which the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai first emerges through to the legend of the eternal presence of Kūkai, body and soul, at the Okunoin which emerged later in the 11th century. This thread of bodily salvation and the related issue of a background in Buddhist hagiographic works of crossover with portrayals of Taoist style immortals are the two main foci of this section. This section also reflects on the Pure Land influences on the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the period after the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* and the *Seiji yōryaku* which were the focus of the previous section. Its focus differs, however, in that its main purpose is to set that Pure Land influence in a context of bodily salvation as demonstrated in a broad range of hagiographic materials. These concerns are key to the background of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai, and offer further hints as to why the Pure Land form was applied to the Kūkai story.

This section introduces a selection of materials relevant to the development of the concepts of the holy body and salvation in the body that contribute to a full understanding of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in Japanese Buddhist Intellectual History. Beginning with ancient period materials, such as the *Nihon Ryōiki* and *Tenjiku Ōjōden*, we will see that the ancient period, with its more monistic concept of the other world and this world, a monism sometimes reflected in concepts of soul-body, was one in which even Buddhist hagiography presented salvation or damnation in this body in order to convey a sense of the surety and immediacy of karmic reward and retribution. This is an early Japanese precedent for the type of hortatory message conveyed in the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai.

Given the more dualistic understanding of this world and that which had taken hold at least by the 11th century, these materials presented alone would represent little more than a footnote in the intellectual history of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and the "*sokushinbutsu*" mummies which are a direct result of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai's influence. However, the inclusion of Daoist concepts of the saintly immortal within Buddhist hagiography, from the *Nihon Ryōiki* onward, persists as a theme throughout the Heian period and can be found in later materials such as the Konjaku Monogatari. Its understanding within Buddhist works, as we shall see, sometimes smooth and syncretic and at other times explicitly controversial, is also of great significance to a full understanding of salvation in the saintly body in Heian hagiography. Understanding the degree of interchange between the various traditions is itself an aid to understanding the reasons for the use of a Pure Land form to express the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai.

The principle of interchange in hagiography in terms of the doctrinal expression of

bodily salvation is linked directly to the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai and the *sokushinbutsu*. The first use of the term *sokushinbutsu* may be found in the works of the *ōjōden* author Oe no Masafusa 大江正房 (1041-1111), an author who in his *Honchō Shinsenden* 本朝神仙伝 (an account of Japanese immortals) equates the Daoist *shinsen* with the Buddhist living Buddha 生き仏 *ikibotoke*. This section argues that the eclecticism of Masafusa's hagiographic interests reflects directly the kind of searching for possibilities for salvation that characterized the Pure Land thought of Genshin and Yasutane, which, as argued in the toward the end of the previous section[153], informed the use of the Pure Land form for the representation of Kūkai's holiness to a late 10th century readership.

This section, then, is designed to add broader explanatory strength and detail to the arguments made in the previous section which were limited to Pure Land thought in the 10th and 11th centuries. It aims to provide context and detail with regard to the use of the Pure Land form in the Kūkai hagiography. It does so by returning where necessary to the two main threads of the previous section, issues of bodily salvation in Buddhist hagiography and the use of Pure Land practice and hagiographic form in the Shingon school. It is an addendum to and expansion of the previous chapter.

The immortal in Buddhist Hagiography

There is a definite and inescapable attraction to an immortal, one who has overcome all the defilements and limitations of the body which account for so much of our religious sentiments, which applies to all traditions in which he is found. The *loci classici* for the

[153] Morris, Jon モリス・ジョン *Kōbō Daishi Nyūjōsetsu no Shisō Shiteki Haikei* 弘法大師入定説の思想史的背景, *Nihon Shisoshi Kenkyū* 日本思想史研究 Vol. 45 四五号, 2013 p8

immortal are the Taoist *shen* collections *Lièxiān zhuàn* 列仙傳 (literally: Biographies of Arranged Transcendents) attributed to the Confucian scholar Liu Xiang 劉向 (79-8 BCE) and the *Shénxiān zhuàn* 神仙傳; literally 'Biographies of Divine Transcendents') partially attributed to the Daoist scholar Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-343). The work of the western scholar Robert Campany on these collections is of considerable interest[154]. Forms of achieving transcendence resulted in flying into the heavens, sometimes in broad daylight, and sometimes on celestial chariots. *Shijiě* 屍解 or 尸解 was a practice whereby Daoists transcended death through means of a simulated corpse[155]. This enabled them to live for long periods of time. The latter seems perhaps to have been considered the least impressive of the three. The key point of interest for this study is that these are the original and most common forms of bodily enlightenment in in East Asian religions. This form had so great an impact on the entire East Asian religious world that even Buddhist holy men were to achieve this form of perfection.

Buddhist hagiography and sacred writing featuring amalgamation of figurative concepts of holiness and inter-sectarian patterns in genre is not limited to the world of Japanese Buddhism, nor can it be thought to have begun there. The influence of pre-Buddhist traditions on the Chinese understanding of Buddhism has long been of interest to those specializing in Buddhist doctrinal study. In recent years, particularly, this influence has been the topic of increased study in its instantiations not only in scriptures but also in hagiographic and other devotional Chinese and other East Asian Buddhist literature. A key example would be the recent work by Cartelli on Buddhist devotional poetry of Wutaishan. Cartelli demonstrates that through a series of alterations to

[154] Campany, Robert Ford, 'To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: a Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents' Berkeley, University of California Press 2002

[155] Campany, Robert Ford 'Making Transcendents: Ascetics and Social Memory in Early Medieval China' Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press 2009 p1ff

translations of Indic sūtras dedicated to or involving Mañjuśrī, Mt. Wutai came to be identified as the home of this bodhisattva who could manifest himself in innumerable ways (chiefly in visions, as an old man or five-colored clouds) to devotees who traveled to these mountains. This theme came to blend with a native Chinese tradition of venerating holy mountains where Daoist transcendents (仙 *xian*) lived and magical plants grew. These latter elements occasionally surface in the range of Buddhist literature she refers to[156].

Of course, not all tales of the immortals appear within Daoist contexts. In the Buddhist sphere, the Chinese character *sen* 仙 is used as a translation for the Sanskrit terms for Buddhist holy man with siddhi such as ṛṣi, tapo-dhana, maharṣi or muni (including Shakyamuni). The term *daisen* 大仙 (maharṣi, mahā-muni) is also used, and also in the case of the Buddha[157]. We may point to many examples of general and specific usages of the term within the Buddhist scriptures, including taxonomies of Buddhist immortals. Within non-scriptural Buddhist influenced and Buddhist themed materials, there are also many occurrences of the appearances of *sen*[158].

We have seen in the first section of this chapter that at the earliest stages of Japanese Buddhist hagiography and devotional literature, that is, the *Nihon Ryōiki*, there was a high degree of harmony and, perhaps, a degree of interchangeability in terms of post mortem locations and the attributes of saints relating to the various traditions extant throughout the Japanese archipelago. The trope of Taoist immortals' involvement in Buddhism, and

[156] Cartelli, Mary Anne**.** 'The Five-Colored Clouds of Mount Wutai: Poems from Dunhuang' Leiden: Brill, 2012

[157] For example, the phrase 疙斯仙人墮處施鹿林中 is found in the *Yogâcārabhūmi-śāstra* (Jp. Yuga shiji ron 瑜伽師地論) in the Taisho Tripitika (大正新修大蔵経) Vol. 30 p722c27

[158] A more detailed discussion of this topic may be found in, Morris, J *Kōbō Daishi Nyujōsetsu to shinsentan* 弘法大師入定説と神仙譚 *Nenpō Nihon Shisōshi* 年報日本思想史 Issue 14 p4-6

the involvement of Buddhist holy men in the techniques of bodily salvation can also be identified throughout popular Japanese hagiography.

The flyings off/disappearances typical of *shen* can also be found after the *Nihon Ryōiki* even in the earliest Japanese *ōjōden*. For example, *Nihon ōjō gokurakuki* (1st chapter) *Shōtoku taishi* would seem to be a case of bodily disappearance in the Daoist fashion. Though the phrase "this is a *sennin*" (これ神人なり) may simply be a Buddhist usage, the disappearance at death (太子驚き去りぬ) is not a Buddhist trope.

> 時に年六歳。太子の身体尤も香し。これを抱き懐そ人、奇香衣に染みて数月減せざりき。百済の日羅来朝せり。身に光明あり。太子微服にして諸の童子に従ひ、館に入りて見えたり。日羅、太子を指して日く、これ神人なりといへり。太子驚き去りぬ。[159]

The ability to vanish is a Buddhist siddhi, but the disappearance of the body very much a typically Taoist theme, perhaps due to the importance of relics in Buddhism. This type of body disappearance is also found in the other *ōjōden*, which shows that the genre perhaps did not expunge eclectic tropes in favour of something resembling an exclusive Pure Land orthodoxy relating to more typical *zuisō*[160]. The presence of strangeness and strange tales was a call to faith and practice, but, more so, it is an example of the crossover of the three traditions in popular hagiography of the time.

Oe no Masafusa and the rise of the *sokushinbutsu*

[159] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介 (Eds.) *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 7 *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生伝・法華験記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p12
[160] Ibid. p34

The most interesting focus for aspect of this study is best approached through a focus on the work of Oe no Masafusa 大江匡房 (1041-1111), author of key Kūkai materials *Kōbō Daishisan* 弘法大師讃, *Hōnchō Shinsenden* 本朝神仙伝 and *Daishi Sokushinbutsudan* 大師即身仏譚. These seem to have been the basis for the influential account of the visit to the mysterious mist enshrouded chamber of Kūkai as told in *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* 今昔物語集.

In the preceding sections, we have seen inter-traditional, international and inter-sectarian concepts of the holy man in evidence in the *Nihon Ryōiki*, the *ōjōden* and legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai materials themselves. Oe no Masafusa perhaps represents the epitome of this trend in the Heian period. Indeed, no study of the intellectual historical trends reflected in the milieu that brought the *ōjōden* and legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai genres together could rightly ignore him. He offers the most interesting aspect of this study with a view to explaining the actual development of the *sokushinbutsu*.

Though part of the same lineage of courtly hagiography that includes the likes of Yasutane, Genshin and Kamo no Chōmei, Masafusa's fascination with the mysterious possibilities of personal holiness and perfection extended more widely than perhaps more than any other writer of his time. His interests, perhaps reflecting a *mappō* interest in what evidence there was for the possibility of salvation, included legends of the three traditions, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. This perspective is of course not unique, and such a perspective is typical of the intellectual milieu represented by the *Nihon Ryōiki*. Though the boundaries between the traditions and their adherents were arguably stronger by Masafusa's time, and in this section we will touch on the extent to which his approach was controversial.

Oe no Masafusa's contributions to the development of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai have already been discussed in previous research[161]. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to cover his presentations of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai on the involvement briefly and then explore its significance within the context of his hagiographic interests as a whole, including his work on immortals. I will suggest that the selection of works referred to below are a prime example of the inter-sectarian and inter-doctrinal approach to the presentation of salvation in the *mappō* age introduced above.

In Masafusa's time the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai continued to be developed within the Shingon school. The leading Shingon figure of the period took responsibility for taking it forward, just as had been the case with the original legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai work the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*. The *Daishi gogyōjō shūki* 大師御行状集記, written by the monk Keihan 経範 (1031-1104) in 1089. Keihan was the eighth generation successor to Kūkai as the head monk of the Tōji, and the leading figure of the Shingon school of his time. In the *Daishi gogyōjō shūki* the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai continued to be expressed in the Pure Land form. Here, however, we have the figure of Kangen 観賢 entering the Okunoin. The underlined parts of the following material show the elements recognizable from the 10th century works. Perhaps it would be reasonable to say that effort is being made to acknowledge the special role of Kūkai's successors as access holders to the presence of Kūkai.

[161] Matsumoto Shō 松本昭 *Kōbō Daishi Nyūjōsetsu no Kenkyū* 弘法大師入定説の研究, Vol.22. Tokyo: Rokkō Shuppan 1982 p22ff

「或説曰。延喜年中。観賢僧正有祈誓。感応蒙官裁。開御入定厳窟。欲拝見之処。奥院降満雲霧。宛如黒暗。比肩列座之輩。纔雖聞音声。无見体相。上下道俗。成怖畏。奉念三宝。爰僧正観賢耻罪障之深。屢致无量懺悔。其後漸々散雲霧。既奉拝見。御入定法体。宛如睡人。無敢衰谷色。然勅使等。皆奉礼拝。欣悦无極。次奉剃御髪。奉着法衣。」

The underlined section reads roughly as follows:

Then a mist rose up, obstructing the view so that only voices might be heard. When Kangen did penance the mist dispersed and Kūkai's body, immersed in eternal meditation, appeared. The aspect and the color of his face were undiminished. The Imperial messenger and all who were there worshipped Kūkai. Kangen cut Kūkai's hair and changed his robes.

It is of great interest that the body of Kūkai cannot be seen in the first instance, and requires the proper devotional approach to appear before the visitor. The term *hōtai* 法体 could simply be a deeply respectful way of referring to the body of the enlightened Kūkai and have no further meaning. It may be something far more physical such as the 法體 (*fǎtǐ*) as used in Chinese/Taiwanese Buddhism to mean the mummified body of a great Buddhist monk[162]. It could be his ultimate self, one with the dharma and appearing to one who had the dharma eye. In any case, the manner of seeing it differs from seeing some ordinary being or ordinary body. To this extent it is comparable to the meeting with

[162] Gildow, Douglas, and Marcus Bingenheimer "Buddhist Mummification in Taiwan: Two Case Studies." Asia Major vol. 15.2, 2002 pp. 87–127. 3rd Series, Ritzinger, Justin, and Marcus Bingenheimer. "Whole-Body Relics and Chinese Buddhism: Previous Research and Historical Overview." Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies 7. 2006 p37–94.: Sharf, Robert H. "The Idolization of Enlightenment: On the Mummification of Ch'an Masters in Medieval China." History of Religions 32:1. 1992 p1–31.

an immortal. It is interesting that the body cannot be seen immediately or in a normal manner.

This material, along with its retention of the Pure Land form, was contemporary with Oe no Masafusa, the subject of the following section. We may understand this material as having been of interest to him and representing the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the state at which it stood when he himself took up its reinterpretation.

With the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai receiving renewed interest and being re-represented involving key religious figures of the day, and with a growing recognition of Mt. Kōya's sacredness, it is natural that a man of Masafusa's eclectic religious concerns should take great interest in the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. It is with his work *Daishi Sokushinbutsudan* that the term *sokushinbutsu* first appears, and thus perhaps the earliest link of Kūkai and the early modern *sokushinbutsu* is of his making. It is perhaps also no surprise that it was he who first gave us the term "*sokushinbutsu*". There has been little discussion of the context of the first use of the term *sokushinbutsu*, which has an obvious connection to the very Shingon notion of *sokushinjōbutsu*, implying its realization in the form of an incorrupt body as alive.

The *sokushinbutsu* mummified ascetics, modeled on the legend of the eternal presence of Kūkai, body and soul, at the Okunoin, undoubtedly took their example from the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai as it was at this stage. At the early stages discussed in the previous section, the legend of the eternal presence of Kūkai, body and soul, at the Okunoin was not present. The *sokushinbutsu* themselves are thought to be present in their bodies, buddhas in this very body. There is no evidence for Kūkai to have been thought to have been so until this stage in the late 11th century. Thus it is then, perhaps, that the term *sokushinbutsu* was coined.

Let us return to the 11th century and examine the context in which it was first used. To understand the connection between Shingon *sokushinjōbutsu* thought and the Pure Land context presented in the previous section, it is important to consider the origins of that term. To understand the presentation of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in a Pure Land hagiographic context in its proper context, it is necessary to recognize its inclusion in Masafusa's *Honchō Shinsenden*, a collection on immortals, presenting content which demonstrates some continuity with that of the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*. While a large proportion of the tales of immortals in this collection are tales of Buddhist monks, Shotoku and Kūkai are probably in a class of their own which allow them to appear in any Japanese hagiographic collection. They both also appear in *ōjōden*.

Kūkai's section in the *Honchō Shinsenden*, the ninth tale in that collection, reads as follows:

> 唐の朝より如意宝珠を賓ししより以来、我が朝にこの珠のある所は、恵果の後身に幷せて、かの宗の深く秘するところなり。後に金剛峰寺にして金剛定に入り、今に存せり。初めて人は皆、鬢髪の常に生ひて、形容の変らざることを見ることを得たり。山の頂を穿ちて底に入ること半里許、禅定の室を為りたり。かの山今に烏鳶の類、諠譁の獣なし。兼て生前の誓願なり。[163]

The term *kongōjō* 金剛定 has Shingon overtones not clearly identifiable in the

[163] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介 (Eds.) *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 7 *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生伝・法華験記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p263

Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi, and this material clearly portrays the ongoing presence of Kūkai which may be seen and confirmed. This, then, is the stage at which aspects of an obviously Shingon nature appear. This is precisely the same period at which Kūkai's mysterious bodily presence, the legend of the eternal presence of Kūkai, body and soul, at the Okunoin, emerges. It is also the period in which the term *sokushinbutsu* first appears. Naitō 内藤 has pointed out that at this point in the development of the legend, the place of the eternal meditation itself receives special mention[164]. Certainly, attention to the place in which the holy person dwells, far apart from the ordinary world, is a key aspect of the form of the tales of the immortals. In this version of the tale, much like a mountain dwelling *chisen* 地仙, Kūkai constructs for himself a meditation chamber by burrowing impossibly deep into the summit of the mountain.

It should be mentioned in relation to a discussion of place and the construction of mountain chambers of the immortals, that records such as the mid-Kamakura period *Kōyasan Okunoin Kōhaiki* 高野山奥院興廃記, tell that the Okunoin was on several occasions destroyed by fire and other misfortune, then repeatedly subsequently rebuilt[165]. Perhaps for this reason there was some need for Kūkai to be in an underground meditation chamber rather than above ground in the Okunoin itself. This, however, is a feature easily attributable to the *shinsentan* form. For example, the nineteenth tale of the *Honchō Shinsenden*, "The stone chamber immortal of the land of Dewa" *Dewa no kuni sekikutsusen* 出羽国石窟仙 reads as follows:

出羽国の石窟の仙(ひじり)は、何の年の人なるかを知らず。身を石窟に留めて数百

[164] Naitō Masatoshi 内藤正敏 *Nihon no Miira Shinkō* 日本のミイラ信仰 Kyoto: Hōzōkan 1999 p37
[165] Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai 續群書類従完成會 *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū* 續群書類従 Vol.28 Book 1 1902 p266ff

歳を経たり。粒を絶ち食を罷けて、寒暑を屑にせず。常に禅定を修して、今に猶し存せり。[166]

None know the age of this *shinsen* who dwells in constant meditation in the land of Dewa, immune to heat, cold and the needs of the body. He dwells there still, we are told. The similarities to the Kūkai legend are obvious.

Ma Yō 馬耀 has argued that this collection of tales of the immortals has received formative influence form Chinese tales of Taoist immortals[167]. Certainly, Masafusa has, by his title alone, set out to write Japan's *Shénxiān zhuàn*. Regardless of the Buddhist affiliation of many of the immortals in the work, the form it takes is very much one influenced by Taoist patterns. The Shotoku tale, the second in the collection[168] is explained by Ma in terms of a *Taishi shikaisetsu* 太子尸解説[169]. He introduces a lost section of the Taishi legend in the *Honchō Shinsenden*, preserved in a Kamakura period work entitled *Uetsumiya Tashi Shūiki* 上宮太子拾遺記. The gleaned section, apparently a quote from the *Honchō Shinsenden*, describes robbers entering the tomb of Shotoku Taishi.

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[166] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介 (Eds.) *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 7 *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生伝・法華験記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p269-270

[167] Ma Yō 馬耀 *Ōe no Masafusa Ni Okeru Chūgoku Bunka no Juyō to Hen'Yō-Honchō Shinsenden to Chūgoku no Sendenrui wo Chūshin Ni-* 大江匡房における中国文化の受容と変容— 本朝神仙伝 と中国の仙伝類を中心に in Nihongo to Nihon Bungaku 日本語と日本文学 Vol. 51 2010

[168] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介 (Eds.) *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 7 *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生伝・法華験記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p257

[169] Ma Yō 馬耀 *Honchō Shinsenden no Uetsumiya Taishi Jō wo Megutte-Taishi Shikaisetsu Oyobi Bokuō Kotei Setsuwa to no Kanren Kara-* 本朝神仙伝 の「上宮太子」条をめぐって—太子尸解説及び穆王・黄帝説話との関連から—, Nihongo to Nihon Bungaku 日本語と日本文学 Vol. 46 2008

本朝神仙傳曰。(大江匡房撰)天喜年中。盜人掘其墓。棺槨不朽。尸骸不見。猶尸解之類也。[170]

They find the coffin intact despite the passage of years, but the body is nowhere to be seen. Then there is the explicit final phrase (underlined) which states "thus this is of the type of the *shikaisen* (a Taoist immortal who escapes death by means of simulated corpse). This is a clear indication that the *Honchō Shinsenden* is, in its nature and the intent of the author, a work which attributes Taoist types to Buddhist holy men.

This leaves us with the question of the way in which Masafusa understood the crossover between the Buddhist and Taoist types of holy man. Perhaps the most informative source material in this regard, and with regard to Masafusa's understanding of *sokushinbutsu* comes in his regular glossing, in the *Honchō Shinsenden*, of *shinsen* 神仙 as *ikibotoke* いきぼとけ "living buddha". He clearly considered the two equivalent. In other words, he had a unified notion of the holy individual. This may be found in the seventh[171] and eleventh[172] tales among other places. To give an example of that usage from the first tale:

それ生ける人のために神明を計るは、直の人にあらざるなり。薨去の後、化して白鳥となりて去りたまへり。あに神仙（いきぼとけ）の類にあらざらむや。[173]

[170] Ibid.
[171] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介 (Eds.) *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 7 *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生伝・法華験記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p26
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid. p257

Perhaps this syncretic view goes a long way to explaining how the qualities of a *shinsen* may apply to an *ikibotoke* such as Kūkai. These were the opinions of the man who coined the phrase *sokushinbutsu*, the most prolific hagiographer of his age. It would seem clear that Kūkai's status as *ikibotoke* may be his primary qualification for inclusion here, transcending the prima facie differences.

The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the late middle ages

The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai also came to be presented in terms of visited a saved, and (increasingly) a being who leads to salvation. Various among the elements of preparing for death in the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi* still remain, but the genre has changed by this point to include the actions of visitors. The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai finds perhaps its most well-known literary instantiation in the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* (a work of unknown authorship which dates to the first half of the 12th century[174]). This version adds an element of visiting the Okunoin, in the second paragraph of the extract below, the 25th tale in Vol. 11 of the collection:

「大師返給テ、諸ノ職皆辞シテ、御弟子二所々ヲ付ク。東寺ヲバ実恵僧都二付ク。神護寺ヲバ真済僧正ニ付ク。真言院ヲバ真雅僧正ニ付ク。高雄ヲ素テ南山二移リ給ヌ。堂塔・房舎ヲ其員造ル。其中ニ高サ十六丈ノ大塔ヲ造テ、丈六ノ五仏ヲ安置シテ、御願トシテ名ツケツ。金剛峰寺トス。亦、入定ノ所ヲ造テ、承和ニ年ト云フ年ノ三月二十一日ノ寅時ニ、結助跌座シテ、大日ノ定印ヲ結テ、内ニシテ入定。年六十二。御弟子等、遺言依テ彌勒宝号ヲ唱フ。

[174] From the events depicted in some of the tales it seems likely that it was written down at some point during the early half of the 12th century, after the year 1120 by the Japanese monk Minamoto no Takakuni 源敬亮 (1004–1077).

其後、久しク有テ、此ノ入定ノ峒ヲ開テ、御髪剃リ、御衣ヲ着セ替奉ケルヲ、そノ事絶テ久ク無カリケルヲ、般若寺ノ観賢僧正ト云フ人、権ノ長者ニテ有ケル時、大師ニハ曾孫弟子ニゾ当ケル、彼ノ山詣テ入定ノ峒ヲ開タリケレバ、霧立テ暗夜ノ如クニテ霧見不リケレバ、暫く有テ、霧ノ閉マルヲ見レバ、早ク、御衣ノ朽タルガ、風ノ入テ吹ケバ、塵二成テ被吹立テ見ユル也ケリ。塵閉マリケレバ、大師ハ見エ給ケル。御髪ハ一尺計生き在マシケレパ、僧正自ラ水ヲ浴ビ浄キ衣ヲ着テ入テゾ、新キ剃刀ヲ以テ御髪ヲ剃奉ケル。水精ノ御念珠ノ緒ノ朽ニケレバ御前ニ落散タルヲ、抬ヒ集メテ緒ヲ直ク挿テ、御手ニ懸奉テケリ。御衣清浄ニ調へ儲テ着奉テ出ヌ。僧正自ラ室ヲ出ゾトテ、今初テ別レ奉ラム様ニ不覚泣キ悲レテ、其後ハ恐レ奉テ、室ヲ開ク人無シ。但シ、人ノ詣ヅル時ハ、上ケル堂ノ戸自然ラ少開キ、山ニ鳴ル音有リ。或ル時ニハ金打ツ音有リ。様々ニ奇キ事有ル也。鳥ノ音ソラ希ナル山中也ト云ヘドモ、露恐シキ思ヒ無シ。」[175]

Looking at the form of this *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* version of the Kūkai legend, we may observe a number of differences in relation to the Pure Land form examined in the previous chapter. For example, the sections that concern the qualities of Kūkai's incorrupt body are written in the affirmative rather than the negative. Certainly, there is little obvious remnant of the Pure Land form. The story has moved on from a genre which builds up toward the moment of death to one which is characterized by a visit to a sacred person. Visiting of this special holy place by monks and the interaction with the immortal saint are elements which fit extremely well with the visits to *shen* made so through

[175] Mabuchi Kazuo 馬淵和夫, Kunisaki Fumimaro 国東文麿 and Inagaki Taiichi 稲垣泰一, Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshū 日本古典文学全集 21 *Konjaku Monogatarishū* 今昔物語集 1, Tokyo: Shōgakkan 1971 p169-170

Buddhist means given above. This is by no means to say that Kūkai is portrayed as a *shen*. The observation I wish to make is that the storyline fits within the wider context of the achievement of salvation in the body recognised from early Heian Buddhist works and, in its most famous instantiation, with wonderful tales of visits to Buddhist immortals complied along with it. The doctrinal background to the tales varies from demonstrations of the physical realities of afterlives, special holiness, Pure Land rebirth and the power of the Lotus Sutra. There is, however, a shared element not only of wonder but of proof. This speaks to the human need for locative and somatic representation of the mysteries of salvation. That is the broader context into which all of the materials and subject matters treated in this research fall. I would suggest that it is particularly because of this context that the cross-pollination of genres came into effect. In addition to genre concerns there are also thematic elements which run from the *Nihon Ryōiki* throughout the history of Buddhist and Taoist tales of salvation in the body.

There are a number of cases in the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* of visits to *shen*, typically where the power of the Lotus Sutra confers the status of a *shen*. It is worth considering these in detail. A typical example is the story of Giei who visits an immortal and is told that "no human has ever been here before". This makes a distinction between the places of the immortals and the mortal space. The tale goes on to explain that the immortal used to be a monk who performed the same kind of practices that a monk might. Furthermore, it is the power of the Lotus Sutra which has let him "live here and want for nothing". The Sutra chanting and the dedication of merit in the tale are typically Buddhist. The "I smell man" indicates once again that the immortal is physically and existentially different to the man Giei. The last lines, however, deposit Giei back in the world of the ordinary mortal, and uses the term *hokke no jisha* 法華の持者. The sacredness of the monk meeting the

immortal is demonstrated in the peoples bowing of their heads. Yet, like the fog enshrouded *okunonin* in the section above. The immortal, like the eternally meditating Kūkai, is not to be seen by just anyone any time. Where does this content come from if not from the same place? The text is as follows:

Konjaku Monogatari Shū Vol. 13, Tale 1

此ノ聖人立ヌ。義睿ヲ見付テ、奇異ニ思ヘル気色ニテ、大ニ驚テ云ク、「此ノ所ニハ古ヨリ于今人来ル事無シ。山深クシテ谷ノ鳥ノ音ソラ猶シ希也。況ヤ人来ル事ハ絶タルニ、何人ノ来リ給ヘルゾ」ト。義睿答テ伝ク、「我レ、仏ノ道ヲ修行セムが為ニ此ノ山ヲ通ル間、道ニ迷テ来レル也」ト。聖人此の由ヲ聞テ、義睿ヲ房ノ内ニ呼ビ入レシ。見レバ、形端正ナル童、微妙ノ食物ヲ捧テ来テ令食ム。義睿此ヲ食ベテ、日来ノ餓皆直テ、楽シキ心ニ成ヌ。

義睿、聖人問テ云ク、「聖人ハ何レノ程ヨリ此ノ所ニハ住給フゾ。亦、何ニ依テ如此ク諸ノ事心ニ任セテ」。聖人答テ云ク「我レ、此ノ所ニ住テ既ニ八十年ニ余レリ。我レ本比叡ノ山ノ僧也。東塔ノ三味ノ座主ト云シ人ノ弟子也。其ノ人小事ニ依テ勘当シ給ヒシカバ、愚ナル心ニ本山ヲ去テ、心ニ任セテ流浪シテ、若ク盛ナリシ時ハ、在所ヲ不定ズシテ所々ニ修行シキ。年老テ後ハ、此ノ山ニ跡ヲ留メテ、永ク死ナム時ヲ待ツ也」ト。[176]

The tale of the Kuzukawa monk is a similar case, involving a devout monk having the chance to meet a Lotus chanting immortal. There is a vivid description of the body of the immortal, whose “bones had no flesh on them and his only robe was moss”.

[176] Mabuchi Kazuo 馬淵和夫, Kunisaki Fumimaro 国東文麿 and Inagaki Taiichi 稲垣泰一 Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshū 日本古典文学全集 21 *Konjaku Monogatarishū* 1 今昔物語集 Tokyo: Shōgakkan 1971 p352-353 修行僧義睿値大峰持経仙

籠葛川僧値比良山持経仙語

仙人僧ニ語テ云ク、「我ハ此レ本、興福寺ノ僧也。名ヲバ蓮寂ト云ヒキ。法相大乗ノ学者トシテ其ノ宗ノ法文ヲ学ビ翫ビシ間ニ、我レ法花経ヲ見奉リシニ、『汝若不取 後必憂悔』ト云フ文ヲ見テシヨリ、始テ菩提心ヲ発シキ。＜中略＞永ク本寺ヲ出デ、山林ニ交テ仏道ヲ修行シテ、功至リ徳ヲ重テ、自然ラ仙人ト成ル事ヲ得タリ。今宿因有テ此ノ洞ニ来レリ。人間ヲ離レテ後ハ、法花ヲ父母トシ、禁戒ヲ防護トシテ、一乗ヲ眼トシテ遠キ色ヲ見、慈悲ヲ耳トシテ諸ノ音ヲ聞ク。亦、心ニ一切ノ事ヲ知レリ。亦、兜率天ニ昇テ弥勒ヲ見奉テ、亦、余ノ所々ニ行テ聖者ニ近付ク。[177]

The theme of it being a first visit, common to much of these tales (and the Kūkai tale of this period) is also present here. Another typical feature present here is the initial reluctance of the immortal to show himself. There is "…first keep away from me for a while. The smoke of the human world makes my eyes sting and water. Come to me in seven days". Once again, the immortal like being was a former monk: "I used to be a monk and a scholar, the immortal said, "and I did my best to master the approved doctrines. But I read in the Lotus Sutra, 'He will regret it, who does not take up (this sutra),'…and I gave rise to the *bodhicitta*. The sutra said to practice in a place apart, and thus I did. Then my karma led me to this cave, and I left the human world altogether." We also have an account of the immortals encounters with Buddhist holy beings and attainment of Buddhist *siddhi* appropriate to a bodhisattva toward the end of the extract above. Then finally, there is the leave-taking: "he knew that he could not adhere to a life

[177] Ibid. p358-359

like that of the immortal. He bowed and started for home. The Immortal's power brought him to the Kuzu river in a day"[178]. The theme of it being a first visit is also instantiated here.

The twelfth tale of the thirteenth volume of the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* is of particular interest, as it concerns the chance visit of a monk of *Chōrakuji* 長楽寺 to the secret mountain abode of a nun who has entered into meditative stillness (*nyūjō*).

> 亥ノ時許ヨリ、宿セル傍ニ細ク幽ニ貴キ音ヲ以テ法花経ヲ誦スル音ヲ聞ク。僧、「奇異也」ト思テ、終夜聞テ思ハク、「昼ハ此ノ所ニ人無カリツ。仙人ナド有ケルニヤ」ト、〈中略〉「尚ヲ此ノ経ヲ誦シツル音ハ何方ニカ有ツラム」ト怪ク思テ、「若シ此ノ巌ニ仙人ノ居テ誦シケルニヤ」ト、〈中略〉此レヲ聞クニ、入定ノ尼ソラ如此シ。[179]

The underlined section in the middle of the passage is significant, as it confirms the theme of the mountain dwelling being set apart from the ordinary world of mortals ("none would come to this place by day. This must be a place where *shinsen* dwell"). By association, the nun in meditative stillness is perceived as of the type of a *shinsen*. Perhaps it is no accident that this tale has been redacted into the collection immediately prior to the legend of Kūkai himself, the archetypal Japanese tale of a Buddhist religious dwelling in the mountains in meditative stillness.

There are many instances in the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* which confirm the purity and appropriateness of the mountain locations of the holy beings. For example, the thirtieth

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[178] There are a large variety of similar tales, such as Ujishui Monogatari 宇治拾遺物語 8/7

[179] Mabuchi Kazuo 馬淵和夫, Kunisaki Fumimaro 国東文麿 and Inagaki Taiichi 稲垣泰一 Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshū 日本古典文学全集 21 *Konjaku Monogatarishū* 1 今昔物語集 Tokyo: Shōgakkan 1971 p388-390

tale of the thirteenth volume recounts the story of a skull eternally chanting the Lotus sutra.

> 其ノ後、事ノ縁ニ依テ、京ニ下テ、一条ノ北ノ辺ニ有ル堂ニ宿シヌ。日来ヲ経ル間ニ、其ノ所ニシテ身ニ病ヲ受テ悩ミ煩フ間、弥ヨ心ヲ至シテ法花経ヲ読誦シテ、彼ノ夢ノ告ヲ信ズ。而ルニ、遂ニ病愈ル事無クシテ死ヌ。弟子有テ、近キ辺ニ棄置レツ。其ノ墓所ニ、毎夜ニ法花経ヲ誦スル音有リ。「必ズ一部ヲ誦シ通ス」ト。<u>弟子人ノ告ニ依テ、其ノ髑髏ヲ取テ、山ノ中ニ清キ所ヲ撰テ置ツ。其ノ山ノ中ニテモ尚、法花経ヲ誦スル音有リ</u>。[180]

The underlined part describes it being placed in a pure part of the mountains. We may also mention for comparison the biography of Yakuren 薬蓮, who physically disappeared at death. Yakuren, who lived at Nyohōji 如法寺 in Nakatsu 中津 Village of Takai 高井 District in Shinano 信濃 Province, recited the *Amida Sutra* throughout his life. He announced to his two children that he would depart for the Pure Land the next morning. They helped him bathe and wash his clothes. He entered a Buddha hall at night and ordered his children to keep the doors shut until the next morning. Beautiful music was heard from the hall all night. When the doors were opened the next day, both Yakuren and the sutra that he had carried into the hall had disappeared[181]. The text goes on to describe the way in which those who achieve Pure Land rebirth usually leave their body behind as a sign. There is then the suggestion that some might say the gods of the earth removed his body to a pure spot in the mountains appropriate to a holy man. Yet the *zuisō* of music

[180] Ibid. p428-429

[181] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介 (Eds.) *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 日本思想大系 7 *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生伝・法華験記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p34-35

shows that a birth in the pure land has occurred, and the children watched the Buddha hall all through the night. This, then, has happened "in the flesh"...very much as with the cases in the *Nihon Ryōiki*, *Tenjiku ōjōden* and the cases included in the *Honchō Shinsenden*. The notion of the pure body of a saint requiring a pure spot gives an indication of the logic behind the fame, purity and power to save of Kūkai's body going hand in hand with that of Mt. Kōya.

The question presents itself as to the extent of Chinese influence on the form and content of the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū*, a topic taken up in recent scholarship. According to Kobayshi and 小林 Li 李[182], a strong and formative Chinese influence on the work is undeniable. If we accept their strong arguments, the question remains as to why this content was used in a Japanese context. An answer given only in terms of China's cultural dominance and the availability of ready-made hagiographic models is, I would argue insufficient. This form and content answers a to "Sitz im Leben" within Japanese Buddhism.

Firstly, the location of the content in Japan was vital to showing that the religious truths and possibilities of salvation which existed elsewhere in the Buddhist world also existed in Japan. This applies to the crossover with Taoist *shen* in Buddhist contexts. The discussion of the *Honchō Shinsenden* is clearly a prime example of this type of concern. Having the saints and sainthood of Japan represented in the leading hagiographic forms of the time is an imperative which, as this research has shown, transcends not only sects but also national boundaries. This answered an institutional need for legitimacy and, through that, the support and faith of believers. It also spoke to a growing existential need

[182] Kobayashi Yasuharu 小林保治 and Ri Meikei 李銘敬 *Nihon Bukkyō Setsuwashū no Genryū* 日本仏教説話集の源流 Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2007

for proof of salvation to those of this land in the time of the declining law. Thus, rather than the Chineseness per se of any of this material, the thread of bodily salvation, or lack thereof, deserves attention. It has the tangibility to promise access to saved and saving beings in this land which holds together the many interwoven influences on the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai, with the Pure Land form foremost among them.

The fundamental element of overlapping of influences from Taoist and Buddhist religious practices even at a basic theoretical level has long been noted in previous research. For example, the possibility of Taoist roots to the *kokudachi* which was practiced by Kūkai and was so significant an element in the *sokushinbutsu* practice which drew inspiration from the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai. Indeed, though we have seen that the 10th and early 11th century instantiations of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai were marked by the Pure Land characteristics, the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the fully formed legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai with an implied the legend of the eternal presence of Kūkai, body and soul, at the *Okunoin* is taken forward within a context which explicitly links the notion of *shen* with Buddhist ideals. This was perhaps not uncontroversial at the time. We may understand it to reflect an interest in religious mystery, specifically tales depicting salvation, which is stronger than the demands of sectarian or doctrinal considerations. To explore this let us step back from the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* and consider the further development of the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the Tale of Heike.

The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the *Heike Monogatari*

The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai in the *Heike Monogatari* 平家物語 represents a final stage in the development of the legend, at which Kūkai actively interacts

and converses with his visitors. This, I argue, brings it to the closer than ever to the *shinsentan* form. The first argument I will make for this assertion comes from a redaction criticism perspective. Let us turn to the end of the *Yokobue* 横笛 section of the *Heike Monogatari*, which serves as a prelude to the *Kōya no maki* 高野巻, the section which deals with a visit to the Okunoin and interaction with Kūkai.

> 三位中将是に尋あひてみ給へば、都に候し時は、布衣に立烏帽子、衣文をつくろひ、鬢をなで、花やかなりしおのこ也。出家の後は、けふはじめて見給ふに、未卅にもならぬが、老僧姿にやせおとろへ、こき墨染に、おなじ袈裟、思ひ入れたる道心者、うら山しくや思はれけむ。晋の七賢、漢の四皓が住みけむ商山・竹林のありさまも、是には過ぎじとぞ見えし。[183]

Here we have the appearance, in terms of metaphor, of Taoist style sages from classical China. A Mt. Kōya monk is likened to the seven sages of the bamboo grove (Jp. *Chikurin Shichiken* 竹林七賢) and four drunks of Mt. Shang (Jp. *Shōzan Shikō* 商山四皓). Thus, in a similar fashion to the tales in the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū*, Kōya is depicted as an otherworldly abode appropriate to *shinsen*. Then, in the *Kōya no maki*, we are given a new version of the visit of Kangen to the Okunoin-the same incident presented in the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū* version of the Kūkai legend.

> 抑延喜の御門の御時、御夢想の御告あッて、ひはだ色の御衣をまいらせら

[183] *Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* 新日本古典文学大系 44 (Annotations by Kajihara Masaaki 梶原正昭 and Yamashita Hiroaki 山下宏明 *Heike Monogatari* 平家物語 (Book 1) 1991 p168. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten. Also see Satō Hirō 佐藤弘夫 *Heike Monogatari ni okeru shi to kyūsai* 平家物語における死と救済 Kokubungaku 国文学 Vol. 52 no.15 p227-228

れしに、勅使中納言資澄卿、般若寺の僧正観賢をあひ具して、此御山に参り、御廟の扉をひらいて、御衣を着せた奉らんとしけるに、霧あつくへだゝッて、大師おがまれさせ給はず。こゝに観賢、ふかく愁涙して、「われ悲母の胎内を出て、師匠の室に入ッしより以来、未だ禁戒を犯ぜず。されば、などかおがみ奉らざらん」とて、五体を地になげ、発露啼泣したまひしかば、やう〳〵霧はれて、月の出るが如くして、大師おがまれ給ひけり。時に観賢随喜の涙を流ひて、御衣をきせ奉る。御ぐしのながくおひさせ給ひたりしかば、そり奉るこそ目出たけれ。勅使と僧正とは拝み奉り給へども、僧正の弟子石山の内供淳祐、其時は未だ童形にて供奉せられたりけるが、大師をおがみたてまつらずしてなげき沈んでおはしけるが、僧正手をとッて、大師の御ひざにおしあてられたりければ、其手一期が間かうばしかりけるとかや。その移り香は、石山の聖教に移ッて、今にありとぞ承る。[184]

The content is largely the same, including the initial mist and Kangen's prayerful and penitent response to the initial impossibility of seeing the master. In this case, however, the young disciple Shunyū 淳祐 is present. Due to his youth and lack of progress on the Buddhist path, he is unable to see Kūkai. This is precisely the pattern which applies to the *shinsen*, unapproachable by ordinary mortals. Proving the presence of the master, Shunyū touches his knee, which leaves a permanent fragrance on the hand with which he did so. Perhaps the most remarkable part of this version of the legend is the following section in which Kūkai dictates a letter to the emperor.

大師、御門の御返事に申させ給ひけるは、「われ昔薩埵にあひて、まのあた

[184] Ibid. p229-230

り悉く印明をつたふ。無比の誓願をおこして、辺地の異域に侍り。昼夜に万民をあはれんで、普賢の悲願に住す。肉身に三昧を証じて、慈氏の下生をまつ」とぞ申させ給ひける。彼摩訶迦葉の鶏足の洞に籠て、しづの春風を期し給ふらむも、かくやとぞ覚えける。[185]

The letter explains that he has incarnated in Japan to save the sentient beings there. Like Mahākāśyapa (Jp. Makakasho 摩訶迦葉), he explains, he is meditating in a mountain. Despite the fact that Kūkai is supposedly in eternal meditation, in the Mt. Kōya Okunoin, he may speak to visitors. The special mountain sanctum where special visitors may interact with the holy being gone beyond the ordinary status of a mortal is the form of the *shinsentan*. It is used here to take the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai forward. This was a period at which Mt. Kōya was beginning to become a place for the enshrinement of the bones and relics of the dead, beginning with the relics of emperors. Kūkai the holy being and Mt. Kōya the holy place would from this point on increase the range of their influence. Kōya *hijiri* would carry the faith of the mountain to the regions of Japan, and carry the bones of the faithful to the mountain. Kōbō Daishi would become a holy person active in the world of popular faith far beyond the bounds of Mt. Kōya, appearing to pilgrims and the faithful throughout Japan. It seems that a legend which transcended sect doctrine was necessary to achieve this.

The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai is the hagiographic representation of Kūkai's ongoing power to save beings. That power took on a Pure Land context with few limits imposed by institutional affiliation. However, the Shingon *sokushinjōbutsu* content

[185] Ibid. p230

was present soon after the *Kongobujigonryūshugyōengi*, and it was this image of the holy man embodied by Kūkai that set in and came to be the *sokushinbutsu*. Here we see an example of an image in words generate a new archetypal image in bodily form, the *sokushinbutsu*. It was an image in words of the ideal saint. That ideal was specific to a certain point in time, but valent and identifiable within a wider context of concepts the holy person and the holy death which had existed in Japan at least since the time of the *Nihon Ryōiki*.

As the involvement of Indian, Chinese and Japanese legends in the *Nihon Ryōiki* and the *ōjōden* genre as a whole show, this context was one which valid throughout the Buddhist world, certainly the East Asian Buddhist world, at the time. Though the intellectual historical content is not limited to Japan, there seems little need to suppose that the specifics of the Kūkai myth echo any hagiography outside of the Japanese canon of the hagiography of leading holy men and women, given the breadth of that canon itself. Thus the thread of Japanese religious culture which links the legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai to the *sokushinbutsu* is a multi-national, multi-traditional and inter-sectarian one, which we may trace back to the *Nihon Ryōiki* with its tales from the 3 countries. The thread is one with two major features. One is the meld together of Buddhist and Taoist ideas of sainthood, and the other is the increasing pre-eminence of pure land hagiographical genre collections.

Chapter 3 Section 1

The intellectual history of the *corpora incorrupta* of Catholic saints

And Jesus cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many.

Mt. 27:50-3

This section introduces the cultural context and intellectual history of *corpora incorrupta* in medieval, particularly late medieval Western Europe. What was the significance and appeal of these "whole body relics" (Bingenheimer[186]) in a time which was the heyday for the deliberate separation and distribution of the relics of saints? Seen in the light of a growing body of scholarship on religion and the senses in the middle ages, the light, fine perfumes, beauty and general splendor attributed to the *corpora incorrupta* would seem to a post reformation protestant eye part of a worldview in which the spiritual was mixed, perhaps confused, with the material and material values. Yet, the ambiguities surrounding *anima* (spirit) and *caro* (the flesh, as distinct from flesh and bone) in relation to questions of holiness, purity, post mortem states and resurrection which gave rise to many debates among the thinkers of the late middle ages demand a recognition of the cultural and intellectual context that led to a marked increase in the veneration of *corpora incorrupta* toward the end of the middle ages. My previous work has pointed to medieval

[186] Ritzinger, Justin, and Marcus Bingenheimer. "Whole-Body Relics and Chinese Buddhism: Previous Research and Historical Overview." Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies 7. 2006 p37–94

understandings of the sensuality and heavenly riches which related to this notion of sainthood, and to the increased sense of presence which the *corpora incorrupta* provided. This presentation demonstrates that in the high to late middle ages, the period between death and the final rotting of the flesh was a dangerous and ambiguous period which brought together the perils of the body and spirit in a way which would effect the living. Against this background, the *corpora incorrupta* represent the counterpoint case to the bodies of sinners. Nevertheless, the body and soul in pre-Cartesian Europe were too closely linked in fact[187], though distinct in purpose, for any unambiguous doctrinal explanation to be offered with regard to the relation of any dead body to the corresponding rational person. It was this very ambiguity, I argue, which accounts for the attention devoted to the *corpora incorrupta*, particularly as Catholic Europe moved into the Reformation and Counter-Reformation periods. This is a distinct and more developed set of ideas than the purely hortatory use of the concept and phenomenon of saintly incorruption which characterizes the pre-medieval *vitae*.

Introducing *corpora incorrupta*

Corpora incorrupta, in a literal sense, are bodies (which after death) have not decayed. These are pure bodies which are undamaged by the effects of sin, this being a key attribute of the bodies of saints[188]. There are many references in historical materials to early

[187] Pre-Cartesian Europe played host to a number of different Christian understandings of the body, all of which made far fewer distinctions between soul and body than have generally been made by post-Cartesian moderns. It seems to have become a common misunderstanding that the medieval European religious mind rejected or despised the body in preference for the world of spirit. Rather, the body was of primary importance as the main factor of people's individual identities, as the vehicle for religious practice and as the object of resurrection. The *danse macabre* and other depictions of the dead are truly strange to the modern eye. A proper treatment of these broader issues is not possible here. However, I wish to make the point that the medieval person lived in greater proximity to the dead than most modern Western Europeans. The dead were depicted, and burial places were generally closer to people's everyday lives.

[188] Vauchez, A. Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages, Cambridge 1997 pp427-8

Christian saints and martyrs being treated with some form of embalming, and this often did not involve evisceration[189]. I would suggest that the earliest Christian observations of incorruption are related to this treatment of the special dead, as well as to the use of catacombs and cold crypt burial areas. The wider development within medieval thought and society of this Christian concept, which took shape during the ancient and late ancient periods, is introduced in following sections of this section.

There is evidence for the existence of mummified saints throughout Catholic Europe, though some bodies decayed or have been lost. The number of wholebody relics is especially high in Italy; Fornaciari speaks of "315 preserved bodies of saints, including at least 25 mummies."[190]. Cruz lists 102 European mummies[191], however, her list is incomplete. The earliest is the 2nd century roman martyr Saint Cecilia and the latest on the list is Saint Charbel Mahklouf, the nineteenth century Lebanese monk whose body continued to continued to exude blood and perspiration more than 60 years after his death. Most mummified whole-body relics that are displayed in European churches today were enshrined after 1500 CE.

Hortatory Content: Beautiful, pure, virginal and fit for the Resurrection

When Hugh of Lincoln's body was prepared for burial, it was observed to be perfectly clean and shining "like glass" and his skin to be "whiter than milk". His "*interaneorum secreta*" (viscera) were removed to allow for *translatio*, these were also found to be

[189] H. Leclercq, 'Embaumement' in Dictionnaire d'archéologie Chrétienne et de liturgie, 15 volumes (Paris 1921) 8:2718-23

[190] Ascenzi, A et.al. 'Mummies from Italy, North Africa and the Canary Islands' in Cockburn, T. & Cockburn E (Eds.) 'Mummies, Disease and Ancient Cultures' Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980 p266

[191] Cruz, J 'The Incorruptibles: A Study of the Incorruption of the Bodies of Various Catholic Saints and Beati' Tan Books and Publishers Inc. Rockford Ill. 1977 p24ff

perfectly clean[192]. The purity of the spirit leading to a great purity of the body even in death is the common feature of the *corpora incorrupta* of any period. A further common feature is the significance of the *corpora incorrupta* as signs of the reality of resurrection, and the readiness of the saints therefore. Consider the following examples representative of late ancient *corpora incorrupta*:

> "His face was so filled with glory that it looked like a rose. It was deep rose red, and the rest of his body was glowing white like a lily. You would have said that he was even now ready for the coming glory of the resurrection[193]."

The following version of the 眠れる七聖人 legend is taken from the 13th century 『黄金伝説』(九六), but this is an older Christian tradition, in which the reason for the return of the "sleepers" is explained:

> The emperor rose and bent over them, weeping and kissing them, and ordered golden coffins to be made for them. That very night, however, they appeared to Theodosius and said that as hitherto they had lain in and had risen from the earth, so he should return them to the earth until the lord raised them up again. Therefore the emperor ordered the cave to be embellished with gilded stones, and also decreed that all the bishops who now professed faith in the resurrection should be absolved[194].

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[192] Magna vita Sancti Hugonis D.L. Douie and H. Farmer. 2 Volumes (London, 1961-62) 2:218-9

[193] Gregory of Tours (538-594) 'Liber vitae patrum' 7.3.328 100 Brown, P 'The Cult of the Saints-Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity' The University of Chicago Press 1981 p77 and Gregorii episcope Turonensis, 'Miracula et opera minora', in Krusch, B (Ed.) 'Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scripores Rerum Merovingicarum 1,2 Hanover: Hahn, 1885

[194] Jacobus de Voragine, Ryan (trans) 'The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints' Princeton University Press 1995 p117ff

Furthermore, Aetheldhryth (Etheldreda)'s vita demonstrates purity associated with the virgin female.

> "[Her body] has been granted the sign of the divine miracle that the flesh of the buried woman could not decay, to show that she has not been corrupted by contact with men (*a virili contactu incorrupta*)[195]."

There is also the eschatological hortatory content, as can be seen in the story of the *inventio* of the *corpus incorruptum* of St Stephen.

> …it is especially fitting that we should be revealed in the time of your priesthood…For the world is in danger, from the many sins into which it falls every day. [196]

Finally, the concept of the continued presence of the saints in their earthly remains was clearly a factor with the *corpora incorrupta*:

> *Hic conditus est sanctae memoriae Martinus episcopus. Cuius anima in manu Dei est, sed hic totus est. Praesens manifestus omni gratia virtutum*[197].

The Middle Ages and Richer Contexts

As we have seen, the numbers of *corpora incorrupta*, certainly those extant, increase

[195] Beda 'Historia Ecclesiastica' IV 19 Angenendt, A 'Corpus incorruptum – Eine Leitidee der mittelalterlichen Reliquienverehrung', 'Saeculum' 42, 1991, p336

[196] 'Epistula Luciani' (which dates to around the year 415) 2 Pl 41.801 Brown, P 'The Cult of the Saints-Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity' The University of Chicago Press 1981 p90

[197] A middle ages inscription quoted in Brown, P 'The Cult of the Saints-Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity' The University of Chicago Press 1981, p3

markedly toward the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern period. With moves toward reform of relic worship in the late Middle Ages leading to the Reformations, the *corpora incorrupta* were a useful counterpoint to the 18 heads of John the Baptist or thousands of apostles fingers venerated in Europe. With an increase in travel and potential pilgrimage income in the early modern period, there was a need to offer alternatives to "enormities", such as "the holy blood of Hales" which turned out to be duck blood replenished from the monastery pond, and "the living bones of Sawley Abbey" which turned out to be on a clockwork system worked by a monk who would hide behind the reliquary turning the handle. Yet, this was only a small part of the reason for the flourishing of the *corpora incorrupta* and the concept thereof.

The Middle Ages took the saintly ideal of incorruption and worked it in to both popular and intellectual aspects of culture. Camporesi's comment that: "The 'holy place' in the Middle Ages, was first and foremost the Kingdom of Sugar, the distant island of sensual happiness, bathed in warmth and sunlight, bright colours and fragrant balm"[198] speaks to the popular reality of Medieval notions of purity. As Mauss[199] and many others have argued, the social role of the saint is of essential importance[200]. It was thus within a context of physical concepts of the sublime expanding to what we would call luxury and high social statuses that spiritual merits took shape. It is difficult for the modern Protestant mind to sympathize with a sense that nobility and spiritual austerities should result in qualities corresponding to sumptuous beauties and pleasures of heaven and the body. Before we overly lament the loss of that world view, we should remember that there was

[198] Camporesi, Piero, The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore Cambridge University Press, 2009 p200

[199] Mauss, Marcel, Brain, Robert (Trans.) New York: Norton 'A General Theory of Magic'1972 (1903) p133

[200] See also Brown, Peter "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity, 1971-1997" in 'Journal of Roman Studies' 61 1998 p94

the lower end of the scale, to which most of us would have belonged. The *corpora incorrupta* were avatars of beauty, spiritual and physical, and a leper was considered the opposite[201]. The spiritual and thus bodily control of the *corpora incorrupta* brought them purity, beauty and stasis, the imagined moral lassitude and lack of physical control of the leper led to their physical disintegration. The integrity of the *corpora incorrupta* was, in a period in which courts decided on the sanctity of individual saints, a demonstration of not only of their sanctity but of their desire to remain a part of certain earthly community. This was a period in which the corpse of a murdered man was thought to bleed in the presence of his killer (cf the story of Cantilupe etc), a period in which the flesh would, in terms, speak. In legal terms, the *corpora incorrupta* were examples of saintly *habeas corpus*, there to testify to their sainthood and commitment to a place in which they lay at rest, or work. This is no mere analogy, their bodily testimony had legal standing.

In trying to understand the saintly corpora of the-which had a heyday in the late middle ages and first stages of the early modern period, it would be a mistake to limit ourselves to a consideration of the saints and their religion alone. As Mauss has commented, the body was (particularly in pre-scientific times) humanity's "most natural instrument" for measuring and interpreting the world around and within them. Purity of body even and especially in death was part of the developing notion of idealized knighthood and nobility which took shape in the middle ages. This has been reflected in a range of recent scholarship such as the monograph 'Death and The Noble Body' by Danielle Westerhof[202]. The many elaborate ways of separating and burying the parts of nobles in various places had the practical aim of multiplying their access to sacrality and in particular the prayers

[201] See J. Ziolkowski, 'Avatars of Ugliness in Medieval Literature' in Modern Language Review 69 (1984) pp1-20

[202] Danielle Westerhof, 'Death and The Noble Body' Boydell Press 2008

that might be said for them and near them. As Westerhof states: "rather than enforcing decay and fragmentation, these practices were partly geared towards creating a fantasy of wholeness and incorruptibility suggestive of saintly corporeal preservation found in hagiography, which served to underscore…ideas of nobility and social status.[203]" Rotting, not rotting and the question of spiritual nobility had a social as well as ecclesiastical context. Consider the following: "Ganelon stood before the king, his body robust, his face a gentle colour. If he were loyal, he would resemble the perfect baron." The traitor Ganelon's nobility secures him with a comely body, yet in the Song of Roland, the eponymous hero's body is unmarred in death (protected from "rottyng"), while that of the traitor Ganelon rots and is torn to pieces horribly[204]. The involvement of ideals of nobility shows that the concept of the *corpus incorruptum* was part of a wider and mutually reinforcing Medieval worldview and society in which religion and religious ideas were not separate from law, politics, the hierarchy of social relationships and cosmology.

The mutually reinforcing nature of the concept of incorruptible flesh within religiously orientated perceptions of natural hierarchies in the middle ages is demonstrated time and again in medieval historical materials. For example, the standing of a noble within the Church was also significant to the fate of their flesh. Consider the chronicler Matthew Paris's account of William Earl of Pembroke's post mortem fate. He died excommunicate in 1231. When his cadaver was found in 1240 at the dedication of new Temple Church, it was sewn into an oxhide. The late Earl's body, however, was found so putrid that people recoiled in disgust[205]. This was, the time of *extra ecclesia nulla salus* in both theory and

[203] Ibid. p75
[204] Walpole, R. NCE Johannes Translation of the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle 2 volumes, Berkeley CF 1976 1:171-3, Smeyser, HM 'Charlemagne Legends' in A Manual of Writings in Middle English 1050-1500 gen. ed. J. Burke Severs 10 volumes, New Haven, 1967 pp87-92
[205] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 4:494-5

practice. Matthew Paris relates a different tale indeed concerning saint Edmund, whose body after death gave off a "heavenly scent surpassing that of any balsam or myrrh"[206].

Theories of body and soul

As Caroline Bynum has shown, the somatic miracles of the high Middle Ages reveal a deep-seated belief in the reassembling of body parts at the Resurrection and a masterly control over the body's physicality and emotions. However, the incorruption or wholeness (integrity, *corpus integra*) of the body of a saint was not in itself necessary for the body to be properly identified as the body of a certain person. As Bynum has explained, it did not matter where the body was buried, or in how many pieces a saint's body was divided, if there was "a multiplicity of forms which together made up the body without compromising its material continuity"[207]. Therefore we may understand the *corpora incorrupta* to be very much more to do with the concept of equilibrium and physical purity than the concept of physical/spiritual integrity (wholeness), which, as saints, would have been granted to them anyway.

The most basic intellectual consideration of this principle was provided by Aquinas[208]: "For life and soundness of body depend on the body being subject to the soul, as the

[206] Lawrence C.H., Ed.&Trans. The Life of St. Edmund by Matthew Paris, London, 1999 p167

[207] Bynum, C W, 'Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200-1336' Columbia University Press, New York 1995 pp256-78

[208] Aquinas saw the soul as the substantial form of the living body. Of course, this notion is based on the Aristotelian notion of *eidos*. Medieval philosophy was informed by Aristotle's presentation of soul as life principle. In Dante's 'Divine Comedy', the soul provides for an ethereal self which has all the features of the body. This represents the situation between death and resurrection. Broadly speaking, the role of the soul in Medieval thought was to preserve the personal identity in the absence of a body; this viewpoint corresponds to that of Aquinas. Even after the 14th century, when it is often thought the move toward modern more dualistic views began, thinkers such as Gregory of Ghent struggled with such problems as why the corpse retains its shape after the soul has gone elsewhere. There is also a popular idea of the homunculus, the tiny body possessed of a soul in popular depictions, especially paintings, thereof. Though the elite/popular distinction is somewhat out of fashion, there seems to be no reference to this concept among philosophers.

perfectible is subject to its perfection. Consequently, on the other hand, death, sickness and all defects of the body are due the lack of the body's subjection to the soul.[209]". This perhaps explains the general silence on the subject of the putrefaction of the bodies of saints. What we may have learned of the soul of St. Thomas Aquinas by the actions of his dead body was, as it happens, lost to hagiographers. Like many popular holy men, to speed up the distribution of his relics he was subjected to the post mortem procedure known as the *mos teutonicus*, that is, boiling. Even after the 14th century, when it is often thought the move toward modern more dualistic views began, thinkers such as Gregory of Ghent struggled with such problems as why the corpse retains its shape after the soul has gone elsewhere. There is also a popular idea of the homunculus, the tiny body possessed of a soul in popular depictions, especially paintings, thereof. Though the elite/popular distinction is somewhat out of fashion, there seems to be no reference to this concept among philosophers. On the other hand, In Augustianian thought, the body was the "outer man", and the rational soul was its "inner man"[210], and thus a distinction could ultimately be made between the two. The thorny issue over corpse preservation was dominated by the pronouncement of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) that soul and body together constituted a person. This led Thomas Aquinas to conclude, after Aristotle, that the soul constituted the form of the body which was nothing but uninformed matter without the soul's presence. After death, the soul would not be complete until it was reunited with matter to form a body[211].

The practice of the separation of the bodily remains of saints and kings for various political and religious purposes was very common. With this in mind, the fact that the

[209] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II.2.164.1
[210] Augustine of Hippo, *De Trinitate*, IV.3
[211] Brown, E 'Authority, the Family, and the Dead in Late Medieval France' French Historical Studies Vol. 16, No. 4 1990 p814

incorruptibles escaped this treatment is also noteworthy. The beheaded martyr is also to be found incorrupt "*integrum et incorruptum cum capillis et barba*"[212].

Resurrectio carnis was generally understood as resurrection of the body rather than resurrection *in* a body. However, the nature of this body, and the questions posed by its inevitable breaking up over time or by the activities of man and animals prevented any easy or general understanding of the relationship between the dead body and the resurrection body. Nevertheless, I would argue that Christian doctrine demands in some ways a continuity and connection between a dead person and the corresponding dead body. Were none to exist then the veneration of relics and more importantly the doctrines concerning Christ's body during the three days before the Resurrection would become theoretically meaningless. Furthermore, it is perhaps comforting or meaningful to imagine the resurrection body to be something close to that body we recognise.

Many consider Christianity to be a religion of the soul, but as we have seen, in the middle ages, the body was fundamental and even of prime importance in terms of identity. Can it really be the case, then, that the people of the Middle Ages were indifferent to the vicissitudes of the body in death?

Aries's notion of a "tame death" typical of the European middle ages[213], which through its proximity and familiarity held little of the horror that it brought in earlier or later periods, has been the subject of criticism in recent years. I would suggest that while we moderns would put the skeletons of the charnel house or *danse macabre* and the enfleshed cadaver into the same category of the dead, the medievals would make a distinction

[212] Jacobus de Voragine, Ryan (trans) 'The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints' Princeton University Press 1995 p253

[213] Ariès, P The Hour of Our Death (Helen Weaver trans.) Oxford Univ. Press 1981 passim

between them. The former are sterile, bereft of "individual" identity, relatively predictable and static. The latter are still active and, like the revenant, an active threat. The danger of the typical dead body of a sinner was exacerbated by the heavy vapors that came from it. These needed to be countered with light vapors such as herbs and oils. The opposite was true of the body of the pure. This, along with the fact that certain sweet-smelling chemicals emitted by dead bodies, explains the attribution of sweet smells to the bodies of the saints. The worse the sin, the more dangerous the body and the more necessary was human effort to treat and/or preserve the corpse. The many examples of foul and poisonous vapours from the cadavers of evildoers injuring the living in the literature of the time demonstrate that death itself was not always seen as tame at the time. Aries' notion of the tame death is surely not irrelevant, though, to some aspects of the intellectual history of the heyday of the *corpora incorrupta*. It is surely true that one's own aging and death in principle was generally considered something that one did of necessity (though, as Augustine states, through sin as opposed to nature[214]) rather than something that happened to you against your will. Aries, perhaps with the peasant in 'The Death of Ivan Ilyich' in mind, was thinking of a tame *dying*. As philosophers since Epicurus have noted, dying and death are not really the same thing. The philosopher's claim, though, that if one is truly dead then one experiences nothing, if one experiences death then one is not truly dead would perhaps not have sat well with the medieval world view. One's physical death, to the Medieval mind, was a process that continued throughout the process of the decay of one's body. St. Isidore (560-636) claimed that an enfleshed body was *ipso facto* alive. As Elizabeth Brown and Katherine Park have argued, albeit from different perspectives, one of the main concerns in medieval attitudes towards death was the idea of a connection

[214] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II.13-14

between soul and body which was not entirely separated until after the decay of the flesh[215]. For Park, this concern is largely limited to Northern Europe. For Brown, it applies also in Italy and elsewhere.

The experience of mass mortality in the mid-14th century has traditionally been linked to a greater degree of concern with *memento mori*, and is linked with the spread of transi tombs and the like[216]. Amid this time of "*inter omnia terribilissimum est mors*"[217], the *corpora incorrupta* stood out not only as god's chosen and symbols of his power over death, but as clear examples of the type of being-saints-which might be one's only chance of salvation. It has long been stated that the middle ages were a time of the overarching power of religion. The reality of sin and punishment seemed, as many have argued, far more present and important than any promise of heaven for the ordinary man beset by sin and corruption. This is not to say that fear of hell rendered the people of the middle ages morbid like puritans, on the contrary, cheer and humor were their best responses to the grim cosmologies that surrounded them as medieval records of family life such as the Paxtons' materials demonstrate. When God might visit such punishments as the plague, killing those thought good and bad alike, the type of religion that had practical appeal was that of the saints, which might through their sub-divine natures place mercy and a sense of obligation above justice. The mercy, the local presence, connections and obligations, the proof that corruption might be transcended…all these things were demonstrated by the *corpora incorrupta*. This is a different context and meaning from the more limited notion of the purity, through virginity, holiness and other virtues, of the saint alone, and

[215] Park, K 'The Life of the Corpse: Dissection and Division in Late Medieval Europe' Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences 50 pp111-32, Brown, E 'Death and the Human Body in the Later Middle Ages: The Legislation of Boniface VIII on the Division of the Corpse, Viator, 12 1981 p221-223

[216] See K. Cohen, Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Berkeley, California, 1973)

[217] Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae I.2.42.2

the more abstract hortatory message provided by the saints which can be found in early medieval *vitae*.

The Problem of the Flesh and the Development of the Individual

The notion that what happened to one's corpse was merely incidental to what happened to oneself, that is, a psychological ego of sorts, did not apply for typical medievals. A number of studies have in recent years explored the modern efforts in "anti-aging" treatments and the notion that the aged person is not the "real" person[218]. In contrast, the aging, dying *and* the dead person were in the Middle Ages very much part of what we moderns would call the individual person, which was in the Middle Ages very much still the subject of general and communal qualities[219]. The effects of aging were not feared due to their forced exclusion of a person from a youthful (modern) ideal. Rather, among the educated at least, the effect of aging on the humours was feared for its effect on the body and ultimately the soul-the repository of one's saved or unsaved nature. Roger Bacon's work on the retardation of aging through diet and moral strictures, *De retardation accidentium sectutis cum aliis opusculis de rebus medicinalibus*[220] was readily taken on in clerical and intellectual circles. This was not at all uncommon at a time when charnel houses were typical. It underlines, however, a concern with the complete separation of body and soul, and is not merely a practical concern or a social concern which might be easily explained via Mary Douglas's notion of "matter out of place". It was what we moderns would call a "spiritual concern". One might imagine that one would not want

[218] For example, Hallam, E Hockey J and Howarth G 'Beyond the Body: Death and Social Identity' London, 1999

[219] See Bynum 'Did the 12th Century Discover the Individual?' Journal of Ecclesiastical History 31

[220] Little, A and Withington, E. (eds.) Roger Bacon, De retardation accidentium sectutis cum aliis opusculis de rebus medicinalibus. Opera hactenus inedita Rogeri Baconi 9 Oxford 1928

partial or complete presence of the soul in the case of average sinful people, many of whom will be a damned and a baleful presence. This presence was, in the first instance, felt through the actions of their fleshly remains-so poisonous and unruly. This was a key feature of the medieval imagining of the dead, visible at the popular level in the many well-known tales of medieval encounters with the dead-not the sterile bones of the "dance of the dead", but encounters with the more horrible and zombie-like revenants and the well-known tale of the three living and the three dead in which the living are told: "as you are so were we, as we are so shall ye be". The acceptance and popularity of the *corpora incorrupta* is thus related to them being exceptions to a general rule-a logical inference from general theory in a time when beliefs concerning the afterlife were varied and in some senses perhaps incoherent[221]. What quality of flesh, then, related to the continued presence of the soul?

The medieval concept of equilibrium in humours existed in and of the flesh. The restoration of this equilibrium was necessary for the incorrupt resurrection of the saved person, explain scholars such as Goodich and Paravicini-Bagliani[222]. There was a great deal of debate on the question of whether the body was relevant to personal identity, or whether the soul was solely responsible for the preservation of identity. It was generally

[221] I have for a long time been confused by Christian doctrines of the location of the soul with regard to the doctrine of resurrection. If a person enters heaven and is with God after death, what is the meaning of being resurrected to new life and seeing God at the Parousia? Tugwell's study concludes that the doctrine that souls go to heaven, hell, purgatory and other such locations immediately after death was subservient to the doctrine of the Parousia. See Tugwell, S 'Human Immortality and the Redemption of Death' Templegate, Springfield Ill. 1990 passim. However, Christian thinkers were also puzzled by the logic of the matter. In what sense can *visio dei* in heaven, which is perfect, be improved upon by *visio dei* experienced after bodily resurrection? Bynum discusses various contributions to this debate and shows that the conclusion was that a somatic element was an integral part of the perfect *visio dei* promised in Christianity, thus allowing for God providing a somehow limited experience in heaven.

[222] Paravicini-Bagliani, A (Translated by Peterson, D) 'The Pope's Body' University of Chicago Press 2000 p208 M. Goodich 'From Birth to Old Age: The Human Life Cycle in Medieval Thought, 1250-1350' Lanham, MD, 1989

agreed, however, that the soul would be embodied at the sound of the Last Trumpet[223]. I would suggest that we can see in the example of the incorruptibles a point of crossover between eschatologies of the disembodied soul and of the Parousia. The saint was understood to be with God in heaven and with the believers on Earth. The location of the soul itself is in heaven, yet something akin to the resurrection body is attained here on Earth. The *praesentia* and *caro* of the saint is on Earth. Thus the medieval incorruptibles are examples of simultaneous heavenly and Parousial eschatologies.

Thus in the *corpora incorrupta*, the hortatory message of the possibility of resurrection-the remedy for death and sin-is revivified for a time in which the flesh and the humours were the necessary for personhood.

Bynum makes clear that to the medieval mind self-examination and self-control naturally led to an examination of one's embodied practice in relation to the soul, the world and other people[224]. Thus the physical perfection of equilibrium and the spiritual perfection of prayerful self-control represented by the *caro* of the *corpora incorrupta* made them the embodiment of the growing concern of preparing oneself for the resurrection. The notion preparing one's body for judgment through its interrelation with the soul, is the development of a new concept-that of the individual-whose fate is increasingly their own responsibility, and whose identity is transmitted ever further into the future. The *corpora incorrupta* are therefore very much of the essence of this time, offering an image of continued physical presence of the person through spiritual perfections and equilibrium. The importance of the embodied person is that others, here on earth at least, can interact with it and recognize it as a person, not merely a relic or a

[223] Bynum, C W, 'Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200-1336' Columbia University Press, New York 1995 passim

[224] Bynum, C 'Did the 12th Century Discover the Individual?' Journal of Ecclesiastical History 31 1980 pp1-17

spirit. In some cases, of course, this was not expressly related to flesh or lack thereof[225]. The ability of *corpora incorrupta* to both fit, and through their miraculous nature, also transcend theoretical concerns is the source of their appeal in a Catholic Christian tradition which is rooted in physical praxis[226].

Conclusion

The theorist Mark Jenner has suggested that we should be historicizing "bodies" rather than "the body[227]". This goes to the heart of the intellectual historical background of the *corpora incorrupta*. As we have seen, the continued presence of the flesh is associated with the continued presence of the living person. The continued presence of the flesh in this world of corruption is made possible by the purity of the saints ("bodies") and their control over the body. Here the general principles of medieval biology (theories of "the body") meet the *vitae* of saints who, in the Medieval period, were more personal than

[225] Roman Catholicism in the Middle Ages might well be imagined to have enjoyed a high level of control over such ideas as the location of the soul after death. Despite the power of orthodoxy, there were those who expressed their ideas of the afterlife in ways which make the matter less clear. Mechthild von Magdeburg (1210-1285) would great the departed "both body and soul" at the grave. However, it is in Early Christianity that one encounters the greatest ambiguities on this point. Scholars identify present, future and part present, part future eschatologies in the gospels, particularly John. This term refers the various apparently contradictory timings of the day of judgement. The typical term used for Christian death (though not for the death of Christ) is "sleep". This is not usually used in any way (1Thess 4:14 is perhaps an exception) which implies that the souls of the dead are with God in heaven rather than dormant with the body. There are verses to be found which make this view of the location of the soul explicit. For example: Rev 6.9 I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: Rev 6:10 and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? Rev 6:11 And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course. Though being "asleep" in or with the Lord is the common Christian phrase, perhaps, looking at 1Th 4:14-15 there is clearly a certain ambiguity with regard to the post-mortem location of the soul in early Christianity.

[226] Consider, for example, the seven corporal works of mercy (feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick, visit the prisoner, bury the dead) or the Biblical presentation of the risen body of Jesus John 20:17, Mark 16 12-13, Luke 24:13-32, Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-20, John 20:19-24-29

[227] Jenner, M "Body, Image, Text in Early Modern Europe" in Social History of Medicine. Published on behalf of Society for the Social History of Medicine. Volume 12, issue 1, p154

ever before. A saint with personal inclinations could be called upon to show particular favour, while saint who was simply holy and without whims might well remain aloof. The added complexity of the medieval concepts of humours and equilibrium relates to a bio-spiritual concept of personal identity and set of qualities related to bodily actions. From this we can see, following the work of Bynum, a putative sense of the individual in religious practice emerging, that is, someone who is saved by some form of merit in addition to communal participation. The *corpora incorrupta* of the high to late Middle Ages heyday, transcend the more hortatory principles of earlier periods and are thoroughly a part of a more coherent world view in which the purity and beauty of the righteous, noble and heavenly stood in contrast to a world in which physical decay caused by sin-be it no more than original sin, was a constant danger. In other words, the purity of a saint or martyr was also in medieval times achieved due to the blessings of God, but the social and cosmological significance of that incorrupt flesh was enhanced, and more systematically miraculous than mysteriously miraculous. The incoherencies and problems in that world view regarding the exact differences between body and soul and the exact time, location and nature of salvation and judgment are bypassed somewhat by the *corpora incorrupta*, which seemed by their stasis and sainthood to smooth over the contradictions in the concepts of a post-mortem *visio dei* and the post-parousia resurrection. Theirs was a salvation achieved, through the grace of God, in and of their own beings. Their salvation was expressed in the purity and incorruptibility of that necessarily physical being, and it was very definitely a public thing and the defining identity of saints was a public and institutional one. The concept of equilibrium between body and soul, however, was necessarily one which had a strong personal element amid its cosmological and doctrinal contexts. Thus, the *corpora incorrupta* may be understood,

from a certain perspective, in relation to the concepts of personal sanctity and piety which would reach their full development in later Northern European Christianity. We may place the *corpora incorrupta* of the high middle ages, then, very much in and of the intellectual history of the concept of the individual which emerged from the notions of personal salvation which developed in medieval Christian thought. Many questions and considerations remain to be discussed, but I hope this presentation has demonstrated that it is necessary to take a broader view of the *corpora incorrupta* than that offered by discussions of the purely hortatory and miracle-related significance they have traditionally held.

Chapter 3 Section 2

A comparative study of the worship of the mummies of holy people in Japan and Europe

This section of the thesis compares the treatment of the post mortem incorruptibility of the bodies of holy men and women during the middle ages in Japan and Europe. I take a history of ideas approach to the phenomenon, and explores related questions of the relationship between the body and life after death. This section places the incorruptibility of saints/holy people as an aspect of concepts of the attainment of a heavenly afterlife being expressed by miraculous signs involving fragrance, music, light and other pleasures related to purity and luxury. Drawing in particular on the *Ōjōden* (Tales of Rebirth in the Pure Land) and the Legenda Aurea, I explore "concepts or perceptions of relative wealth or poverty" related to heaven and the afterlife in the context of Medieval concepts of

luxury and purity. I explore the significance of a period of preparing for death in relation to questions of liminality in life, death and the location of the soul after death which are raised by the Legenda Aurea and *Ōjōden* materials. I conclude that using categories and questions which apply specifically to each tradition with material from both traditions can be useful in identifying aspects of a tradition in more a more abstract, less limited context.

What does heaven look like and sound like, and what does holiness smell like? We modern Europeans and East Asians probably have an answer to this; that if it is a sensory experience in the usual sense in any way, then it looks, sounds and smells very good. But many of us are uncomfortable with that answer in a way it seems the people of the Middle Ages generally were not. A growing body of work in Europe and Japan has examined the richness of the sensory world of the Middle Ages, and its relationship with the divine. We inhabitants of modern developed nations somehow feel that excessive attention to such sensory aspects could distract from the divine presence which is the sine qua non of both modern and medieval Christian and Buddhist views of the heavenly afterlife. The gold and jewels of the Pure Land described in the third chapter of the Smaller Pure Land Sutra in which we are told "…in that realm heavenly music is played continually. The ground is made of gold. Six times during the day and night mandarava flowers rain down from the sky"; or the heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation chapter 21 are, to us, more an aspect of language than of cosmology, or geography, or the religious longings of a holy person. After all, if large quantities of gold and jewels were something we really wanted, perhaps we should just become stockbrokers or something less moral and more lucrative.

Spiritual corruption giving rise to physical corruption and other foulness was an accepted part of the medieval world view in both Europe and Japan. This is clear, for example, from the treatment of lepers, and is marked in literature by tales such as the Ox-

headed women in the 9th century *Nihonkoku Genpō Zen'aku Ryōiki* or the deaths of Herod and Hadrian in the Legenda Aurea[228]. Spiritual perfection and the presence of holy beings might predictably be associated with an absence of foulness and an abundance of wholesomeness and beauty. The material I will introduce here relates to the miraculous signs involving fragrance, music, light and other pleasures related to purity and luxury associated with the exemplary deaths of devout men and women. These things may seem to a modern person coincidental with the holy, but the original readerships surely thought them to be integral to it. What answers can we give to the question of the extent to which the sensory delights of heavenly wholesomeness and spiritual riches overlap with their entirely worldly equivalents? And what does the fact that we can ask this question about both the Japanese and European material suggest regarding the applicability of the term "middle ages" and qualitative aspects of its cultural history? Drawing in particular on the *Ōjōden* (Tales of Rebirth in the Pure Land) and the Legenda Aurea, I explore "concepts or perceptions of relative wealth or poverty" related to heaven and the afterlife in the context of Medieval concepts of luxury and purity.

This section is concerned with an aspect of liminality in the deaths of those who are picked out as religious "exemplars". The signs which attend their deaths tell us not only that they were successful enough in their religious practices to gain a blessed afterlife, but that this attainment of new life in heaven or the Pure Land coupled with their concern for the religious encouragement and protection of those they left behind provides for a kind of crossover, where the wonderful qualities of the blessed realm may be perceived to an extent in this one. This "liminal" quality begs questions regarding the interchange

[228] Jacobus de Voragine, Ryan (trans.) 'The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints' Princeton University Press 1995 Evil people suffer an implicit death by the "unclean spirit within" p232 Body of Emperor Hadrian rotted and he wasted away to death" as punishment for putting daughters of St. Sophia to death p186, Herod rots to death Ibid. p58

between this world and the other afforded by the passing of a holy man or woman. Should we understand the wonderful signs of new life in heaven simply as something otherworldly, or part of a more general perception of the virtues of things, people and places which was typical of the Middle Ages? I would suggest that the latter is the best way to understand the material and consider the question of whether this had a particular appeal in a medieval context. Though the question of to what extent the spiritual riches of heaven or the pure land and those who are there are of the same essential nature to the virtues available in shorter supply here in this world is too large to address properly, I hope it will provide a framework for the question by presenting the relevant materials from the Heian *Ōjōden* and Legenda Aurea alongside aspects of their intellectual historical context.

My own position is that the concept of virtue (both spiritual and physical) in this world and in the other were imagined as overlapping (that is, comparable by degree) and influenced to some extent the popular understanding of the liminality of this world and the other seen in many of the accounts of the passing of holy men and women the Heian *Ōjōden* and Legenda Aurea. The signs of a virtuous death are recognizably those wonders we may see in this world, that is, the most beautiful things of the sensory realm.

It goes without saying that heaven and the Pure Land were considered replete with inner virtue, that is, the bodhisattva way and Christian piety. In the Pure Land/Heaven, this inner virtue did not exist in isolation from more outward and lustrous virtues such as those of light, fragrance, jewels etc. The passing over to the Pure Land/Heaven of some men and women in the Heian *Ōjōden* and Legenda Aurea is marked by the presence of otherworldly signs on and around their bodies and place of passing. There is a strong sense that this in some regard for the edification of those left in this world, and perhaps

not only a factor of the piety of the deceased and the surety of their blessed life in heaven or the Pure Land, but of the relationship they have with a community here on earth.

As similarities may be found between any two things, comparative study is of little value if it is limited to a list of similarities. Where due attention is given to difference, however, comparison may offer an opportunity to approach exempla in way which is less beholden to established scholastic and academic interpretations of the material. The goal of the type of comparison attempted in this presentation is to facilitate a discussion of cross cultural issues of spiritual wealth and poverty, purity and impurity in the lives and deaths of religious exemplars. The eventual result of this discussion is not intended to be the identification of general truths or truths common to both exempla, but a redescription of the academic categories applied to them, each in the light of the other as suggested by the religious studies theorist Jonathan Smith.[229]

Similarities between Buddhist and Christian whole body relics greatly outweigh differences. In both cases the relics of recognised exemplary religious practitioners are preserved to encourage the people of their area and attract pilgrims. Mummification is understood in both instances to be a result of the practitioner's purity. Their body is removed from the initial resting place and brought inside a temple or church where it is re-dressed and put on display. Some artificial preservative treatment of the body is usual in both cases. The relics, a sign of the power of religion to overcome death and decay, are waiting for the coming of Maitreya or Christ. Both are believed to work miracles and answer prayers. Differences in gender inclusion and the positions in which the bodies are displayed exist, though surely the most important difference is that of the existence of the intention among many of the Buddhist monks to become mummies, which was to the best

[229] Smith, J.Z. In Comparison a Magic Dwells in Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1982 p27

of my knowledge never the case among the Christian saints. Apart from the structural similarities discussed above, perhaps the most significant common point is the importance of the connection of the mummies to a local community and the influence of the local peoples' faith in that individual saint in the preservation of the relics.

Early Christian veneration of relics met with hostility from the Late-Ancient Hellenic world, which generally viewed the dead as unclean or as an ill-omen. Similar attitudes were clearly taken by some within the Japanese religious traditions, as is illustrated by the stabbing of Kōchi Hōin's mummy. The soul, to the Ancient Mediterranean, was something far purer and more lasting than the body. Therefore, the notion of dead bodies being taken up into the heavens or otherwise beatified was not well received by philosophers[230].

Comparing Gal 5:17 and Eph 6:12 we can see conflicting views of the purity of the body within Christianity. Those traditions in Buddhism which discuss the redemption or perfection of the body seem at odds with many comments of even Mahayana sutras such as the Vimalakirti Nirdesa (維摩経). Ancient Japanese temples did not deal with funerals as the death was understood to be impure. Though this changed, there are elements in the medieval tradition which present the Pure Land in terms akin to those of ritual purity. There is Tale 31 of the *Nihon Gokuraku Ōjōden* has Amida and his entourage not come down because of pollution (*shokue* 濁穢). Matsumoto identifies this notion of pollution being incompatible with the Pure Land as the reason why many of the *ōjōnin* perform ablutions (*mokuyoku* 沐浴) before *rinjū*, as in the *Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集[231]. In China, pre-

[230] Brown discusses this with reference to various historical materials. Brown, P 'The Cult of the Saints- Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity' The University of Chicago Press 1981 p6ff

[231] Matsumoto Shō 松本昭 *Nihon No Miira Hotoke* 日本のミイラ仏 Tōkyō: Rokkō Shuppan 1985 p123

mortem ablution was part of the ideal death; it is possible that perhaps some continental influence exists here.

Both in Christianity and Buddhism there are dogmatised notion of an ideal or new physical body. The attainment of this miracle is perhaps more than others ratified by principles of dogma. The whole Church is the body of Christ (Eph 5:29-30). An interesting parallel with the *sokushinbutsu* can be found regarding the description of the corpse of a saint as the "resurrection body", the perfect immortal body[232]. Acharn Mun's hagiographer states "why do the ashes of arhants become relics?...The body of an arahant and a worldling, he goes on to explain, have the same ingredients, with this difference: The mind of an arahant has been absolutely purified, whereas that of the worldling contains defilements. "Body matter is then transformed in accordance with the condition and nature of the mind"[233]. Bonaventure (1217-1274) argued that the pain of Christ on the cross was greater and more intense than that which could be born by other bodies, because Christ's was the perfect human body[234]. The proof of the significance of this understanding of the Christian bodily ideal comes perhaps by the existence of its antithesis in Docetism. Irenaeus believed the Eucharist made us more perfect in body by partaking of the perfect body, consuming that which cannot be consumed[235]. Purity and diet have long been linked, though the reasons vary greatly. The Visuddhimagga suggests that the ascetic "should not take such foods as sesame flour, pease pudding, fish, meat, milk, oil, sugar, etc., which are liked by non-human beings (ghouls etc.)"[236].

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[232] Goscelin, "Life of St. Ivo" in '*Acta Sanctorum*' (the Bollandists) Paris 1867 p286ff

[233] (Phra Acharn) Maha Boowa 'The Venerable Phra Acharn Mum Bhuridatta Thera, Meditation Master' Siri Buddhasukh (trans) Mahãmakut Rajadyalaya Press, Bangkok 1979 p283

[234] Saint Bonaventure *'Breviloquium'* from Peltier, A. C. *et al* (trans) *'Opera omnia: Sixti V, pontificis maximi jussu diligentissime emendata: editio accurate recognita ad puram et veriorem testimoniorum biblicorum emendationem denuo reducta* (vol. 7) 1864-1871 *passim*

[235] Irenaeus *'Adversus haereses'* Book 5, Chapter 2 c.180ce

[236] Buddhaghosa (Bhikkhu Nyanãmoli trans.) 'The Path of Purification: Visuddhimagga' Shambhala Publications, Berkeley, 1976 p77

The texts I wish to focus on are all works which, though compiled by scholarly individuals for hortatory purposes, contain a broad range of legends and beliefs reflecting popular rather than highly intellectual aspects of belief. The Legenda Aurea, compiled by Jacobus de Voraginus around 1260, needs no introduction. The corpus known as the Heian *Ōjōden* collection is a collection of collections. The first of these collections is the *Nihon ōjō gokurakuki* 日本往生極楽記, composed around 986 by Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤. The remaining collections, following self-consciously on the model of the first, are all products of the twelfth century: *Zoku honchō ōjōden* 続本朝往生伝 by Ōe no Masafusa 大江匡房, *Shūi ōjōden* 拾遺往生伝 and *Goshūi ōjōden* 後拾遺往生伝 by Miyoshi no Tameyasu 三善為康, *Sange ōjōki* 三外往生記 by Renzen 蓮禅 (Fujiwara no Sukemoto 藤原資始) and *Honchō shinshū ōjōden* 本朝新修往生伝 by Fujiwara no Munetomo 藤原宗友.[237] The *ōjōnin*, those who achieve rebirth in the Pure Land, whose lives the collections record are not all outstandingly holy, and their rebirth in the pure land is typically the result of their devotion at the time of death. In this regard they are different to the Christian saints, who are chosen by god for their faith to be exemplars of the life of his kingdom to this world. The *ōjōnin* generally lack the direct link to the world of the sacred enjoyed by the Christian saint, who works miracles and lives a life set apart in its sacred quality. Furthermore, little or no attention is given to the purificatory powers of sexual abstinence which occurs throughout Christian hagiography.[238]

The Christian saints are markedly different to the *ōjōnin* as they far more often are

[237] All can be found in NST 7.

[238] Bede provides a good example of this Christian concern in his account of the inventio of St Aetheldhryth, the purity being a sign from God for our edification:
"[Her body] has been granted the sign of the divine miracle that the flesh of the buried woman could not decay, to show that she has not been corrupted by contact with men (*a virili contactu incorrupta*)."[238]

workers and experiencers of miracles. During the course of the *Ōjōdenshū*, we see a move toward the acceptance of the pure land rebirth of evildoers (*akunin ōjō* 悪人往生), which is absent from Yasutane's work and first appears in Oe no Masafusa. This suggests a greater emphasis on Tariki. Yasutane assumed that birth in the Pure Land is closely related to a moral life, and to varying degrees this is true of the other authors. Yasutane himself mentions, in the preface to the *Gokuraku-ki*, that his desire to compose this collection was strengthened by reading stories in the *Jui-ying-ch'uan* about people who "slaughtered cattle and sold chicken" for their livelihood and yet attained birth by practicing the nenbutsu[239]. There is an aspect of accessibility of pure land rebirth to ordinary people which is not the same in the Christian equivalent. However, the basic quality of religious encouragement which the authors and readers found in the tales in both traditions is found in the signs of heaven at the time of death. This is the chronotope of both styles and the key to their comparability.

A further point of difference is the absence from the Japanese material of sweet smelling oil or "manna" issuing forth from the corpses of the saints of the Legenda Aurea. In the legend of Saint Andrew, Jacobus writes "We are told also that a flourlike manna and sweet-smelling oil used to issue from Saint Andrew's tomb, and that by this sign the people of the region could predict the next year's crops.[240]" In the legend of Saint Elizabeth, he writes: "It is recorded that among a great number of miracles she raised many, namely, sixteen, dead to life and gave sight to a person born blind. It is said that an oil still flows from her body.[241]" There are many other examples including the legends of

[239] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞, annotations by Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介, *Ōjōden, Hokkegenki* 往生傳、法華驗記 Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p11
[240] Jacobus de Voragine, Ryan (trans.) 'The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints' Princeton University Press 1995 p18 2
[241] Ibid. p384

John Apostle[242], Saint Nicholas and Saint Stephen[243]. The fact that tombs were rarely a site of religious devotion at this time in Japan may account for this difference.

A key similarity of these popular hagiographies is that their central focus, their "chronotope", is the time leading up to and directly following the death of the subject during which the miraculous signs occur. A representative example from the Legenda Aurea is that of the legend of Mary Magdalena, in which the word of God is likened to a perfume, and we are told "the lady's countenance was so radiant, due to her continuous and daily vision of the angels, that one would more easily look straight into the sun than gaze upon her face." It is the interaction with heaven that leads to the magnificent sensory experience. The saint's passing is described as follows:

> All the clergy, including the priest already mentioned were now called together, and blessed Mary Magdalene, shedding tears of joy, received the Lord's body and blood from the bishop. Then she lay down full length before the steps of the altar, and her most holy soul migrated to the Lord. After she expired, so powerful an odor of sweetness pervaded the Church that for seven days all those who entered there noticed it. Blessed Maximin embalmed her holy body with aromatic lotions and gave it honourable burial, giving orders that after his death he was to be buried close to her.[244]

Another example is that of Saint Elizabeth:

> And as the moment of her departure drew near, she said "Now is the time when

[242] Ibid. p55, 59
[243] Ibid. p43 112
[244] Ibid. p377

> almighty god calls those who are his friends to the celestial nuptials! Another interval, and she breathed her last and slept in peace, in the year of our lord 1231…Although her venerable body lay unburied for four days, no unpleasant odor came from it, but rather a pleasant aroma that refreshed everyone. Then flocks of small birds that had never been seen there before clustered on the roof of the church. Their melodies were so sweet and their harmonies so varied that their music, which, as it were, accompanied the saint's obsequies, won the admiration of all who heard it. Loud was the mourning of the poor, deep the devotion of the people. Some cut off wisps of her hair, others clipped shreds from the graveclothes, to be kept as precious relics. Her body was placed in a monument from which oil was said to have flowed afterwards.[245]

Here we see the importance of the time of prayer and devotion leading up to death, and the signs of the auspiciousness of her passing being made manifest to the waiting faithful.

For comparison I would like to introduce two accounts of the deaths of holy people which represent a number of the key themes of the *Ōjōden*. The practice of the ars moriendi which were believed to aid the practitioner in achieving the ideal religious death as taught by Pure Land thinkers such as Genshin are the mainstay of this Pure Land hagiographic form. These ars moriendi were also commonly practiced by monks and laypeople of Buddhist schools which do not have rebirth in the Pure Land as their main focus of religious practice, as the many accounts of such individuals in the *Ōjōden* show. Two aspects contributed to the ideal way of dying; the first relates to practices before

[245] Ibid. p312-313

death including ablutions, withdrawal to a special chamber, sitting in the lotus or half-lotus position and forming mudras, and the chanting of mantras especially the *nenbutsu*. The second involves *zuisō*, or auspicious signs that rebirth in the Pure Land had been achieved. *Zuisō* include wonderful fragrances, the body of the deceased remaining in a sitting posture, heavenly music or light, and though this was not the hagiological commonplace it is in the Christian tradition, in some cases the body remaining in various ways incorrupt after death was also seen as a sign of rebirth in the Pure Land. Both the pre and post mortem aspects were thought essential or typical parts of the leaving of this world for the Pure Land. These we may compare to materials discussed in chapter 2 section 1, such as *Honchō Shinshu Ōjōden* Chapter 1, *Shūi Ōjōden*, Vol.1 chapter 16. The preparations for death and the peacefulness of the passing are key aspects of the *ars moriendi* recorded in the *Ōjōden*. Leaving the body in a mortuary chamber for a period (a practice usually known as *mogari*) before cremation or burial allowed for the *zuisō* of incorruptibility to manifest themselves.

The holy person's body remaining incorrupt for a long time, *zuisō* manifesting on the holy person's whole body, the holy person's countenance and expression remaining unchanged after death, the holy person's facial colour remaining unchanged after death and a wonderful scent accompanying a holy person's death occur in the Heian *Ōjōden* in that order of frequency.

Hopefully all may recognize the fragrance, music and preservation of the body as common to the Christian and Pure Land materials. Listing similarities in the ars moriendi themselves would also be possible. Whalen Lai[246] has, for example, gone as far with the

[246] Lai, W 'Buddhism and the Manners of Death in Japan: Extending Aries' *Histoire de mentalite de 1a mort*' in The Pacific World, Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies New Series, Number 9

notion of the similarity of the two traditions as to discuss the applicability to the Japanese case of Aries's theories of the changes in typical views of death in the west from the ancient through to the modern periods[247]. Though the similarity allows us to ask the general questions regarding the nature of the holy as sensually gratifying, the traditions of course remain different. A key difference is that the Christian saints are men and women generally of far greater holiness and closeness to the divine than the *ōjōnin*.

In his recent paper focusing on the *zuisō* of "heavenly music", that is, the music of the pure land occurring at the death of an *ōjōnin*, Sato Hirō has described that music as emanating directly from the Pure Land into this Defiled Land and the point of death as a point where the two worlds might meet[248]. Yet, how far away were the two worlds, and their sensory pleasures? Both medieval Japan and Europe had concepts of earthly paradises full of sensory delights. Writing about the various Gardens of Eden, Lands of Cockaigne, and earthly paradises, Camporesi comments:

> "The 'man of God' benefits from the divine light, he is handsome and luminous, like the saintly hermit whom the adventurous monks in the Navigatio Sancti Brendani meet on an island 'full of precious herbs, flowers and fruits…and precious stones'; he is a very handsome man who shines all over. On the 'precious island' called also 'the promised land of saints' There are flowers of many kinds and the trees are always laden with flowers and fruit, and the birds always sing merrily. There is no night on this island, but only clear daylight shining with an intense light; the air is calm.

[247] Specifically, he applies Aries' categories of *Tamed Death*, One's *Own Death, Thy Death* and *Forbidden Death* to Japan. This may also be a means to discuss the question of excessive generalism in Aries' analysis, though this discussion has already taken place.

[248] Satō Hirō 佐藤弘夫 *Heike Monogatari ni okeru shi to kyūsai* 平家物語における死と救済 Kokubungaku 国文学 Vol. 52 No. 15

Hunger, thirst, the need for sleep, pain, sorrow and worry are unknown" [249].

Aside from the many Pure Lands in this world which developed as sites of pilgrimage and devotion from the 9th century onward in Japan, there are a number of references in Japanese literature contemporary with the *Ōjōden* to beautiful places, usually islands, relating to beautiful afterlife. The following is from the 975ce *Kagerō Nikki* 蜻蛉日記 Book One[250]

Toward the middle of the month I heard one of the priests, when not engaging in chanting the nenbutsu, describe a place called Mimiraku, where the dead were to be seen in the distance but vanished if one approached too near. How I wish might go to that country, I thought: "Even the sound of your name gives relief, O Isle of Mimiraku; let me enjoy too, if but from a distance, the sweet sight of you." My brother heard and was deeply moved: "I hear but rumors-let me see her whom you hide, O Isle of Mimiraku."

僧ども念佛のひまにものがたりするをきけば「このなくなりぬる人のあらはにみゆる所なんある、さてちかくよればきえうせぬなり、とほうてはみゆなり」「いづれのくにとかや」「みゝらくのしまとなむいふなる」など口々かたるをきくにいとしらまほしうかなしうおぼえてかくぞいはるゝ。

ありとだによそにてもみむなにしおはゞわれにきかせよみゝらくのしま

[249] Camporesi, P 'The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore' Cambridge University Press, 2009 p243, Navigatio Sancti Brendani, Ibid. p43-5

[250] A village called Miiraku in the Gotō islands off Nagasaki has been identified as the Mimiraku in this legend. Mimiraku is mentioned in the *Manyōshū* and the Hizen Fudoki as a port used in expeditions the continent.

Mimiraku means "pleasure of the ears", hence the comment "Even the sound of your name gives relief". Camporesi's comment that: "The 'holy place' in the Middle Ages, was first and foremost the Kingdom of Sugar, the distant island of sensual happiness, bathed in warmth and sunlight, bright colours and fragrant balm"[251] is not something that many people would agree with unless his statement was qualified, but it certainly applies to Mimiraku. Mimiraku is in this world and its pleasures are no different, it seems, to those of this world which were enjoyed by the aristocratic authoress of the Kagerō Nikki. There are perhaps qualities of the hagiographic genre and the period itself which do not lend themselves to the protagonist's heart, like that of John Wesley, being "strangely warmed". The subtle and impassive vision of life in heaven or the pure land expressed by the Christian and Buddhist scholastic has little place in this genre. There must be spectacle to mark the event and thus there must be sensory riches of the same sort as those we can contrive on earth, but maximized.

The monk Genshin, author of the 985 masterpiece 'The Essentials for Rebirth in the Pure Land' which was undoubtedly a great influence on the *Ōjōden* and their authors, used the familiar range of jewels, fragrances and other delights to describe the Pure Land in contrast to the various filths and sensory unpleasantnesses typical of this world. A leading western scholar of this period, Bowring comments:

> Amida's Pure Land was described as a kind of static ecstasy of light and jewels; but to make it real and truly desirable to his audience Genshin is forced to use language, and language by definition is tied to this world. So in the process of being described,

[251] Camporesi, P 'The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore' Cambridge University Press, 2009 p200

> the Pure Land turns into something again "un-Buddhist," a perfect land where the nonexistence of desire can only be explained in terms of desire fulfilled.[252]

Discomfort surrounding the notion that experience of the holy otherworld should be delightful or even pleasurable arguably reflects modern (where the otherworld is further from us, more abstract) and in many cases protestant influences. Bowring writes "he had to use words" as if this is the reason for the discussion of light and riches. The *Ōjōden* authors could have used more abstract or internal to express Buddhist piety and liberation. Voraginus et al could have left out the sensory riches. These things were not only appealing to a mass audience, but had a scriptural basis and a credibility and reality which they have since lost. These days we rarely if ever describe piety in terms of attendant lusciousness and voluptuousness. What modern Christian writer could write like St Ambrose? There are two sides to this issue of the heavenly splendor the *zuisō* and their Christian equivalents seem to be a particular part. One is relates to the spiritual purity, the heavenly purity; the purity of the pure land manifested in the deaths of holy people going hand in hand with sensory riches, themselves pure. The other is somewhat closer to the conclusion reached by Camporesi, as follows:

> The blessings of the delician paradise tended to mingle with those of God's kingdom, the boundaries between the paradise voluptatis and the city of saints, angels, patriarchs, martyrs, virgins and apostles, become blurred. The two degrees of beatitude paradise and heaven) merge with one another.[253]

[252] Bowring, R 'Preparing for the Pure Land in Late Tenth-Century Japan' in Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 1998 25/3-4 p248-9

[253] Camporesi, P, 'The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore' Cambridge University Press, 2009 p255

Sacred sensory wonder is available in particular to those who have renounced financial wealth or other forms of avarice. Money in the texts I am focusing on is generally considered defiling and something to be quickly distributed to the needy. Keeping money even by accident, as this story from the 7th chapter of the *Nihon Ōjō Gokurakuki* relates, can lead to rebirth far from the Pure Land.

> Precept Master (*risshi* 律師) Mukū made the nenbutsu his everyday practice. He was always lacking food and clothing. He said to himself, "Since I am poor, after I die I am sure I will cause trouble to my disciples who survive me." Secretly, he placed ten thousand in cash in the attic of his hermitage, hoping it would pay for his burial. (Subsequently) the Precept Master took to bed with illness, and suddenly passed away without having told anyone of the cash. The Loquat Minister of the Left (Fujiwara no Nakahira) was an old friend of the Precept Master. The Minister had a dream, in which the Precept Master came to him wearing dirty clothes and having a haggard appearance. In their conversation, (Mukū) said, "Because I have some money hidden away, I have unexpectedly become a snake. I beg you use that money to copy the *Lotus Sutra*."

> 『日本往生極楽記』7
>
> 〔七〕響師無空は、平生念仏を業となせり。衣食常に乏しくして、自ら謂へらく、我貧しければ亡して後定めて遺弟を煩はしめむとおもへり。竊に万銭をもて房内の天井の上に置きぬ。斂葬を支へむと欲ふなり。律師病に臥して、言銭に及ばず、忽ちにもて即世しぬ。枇杷左大臣、律師と故旧ありき。大臣

夢みらく、律師の衣裳垢穢し、形容枯稿して、来りて相語りて曰く、我伏蔵の銭貨あるをもて、度らずして蛇の身を受けたり。願はくは、その銭をもて法花経を書写すべしといへり。大臣自ら旧き房に到りて、万銭を捜り得たり。銭の中に一の小き蛇あり、人を見て逃れ去りぬ。大臣忽ちに法花経一部を書写供養せしめ了りぬ。他日夢みらく、律師法服鮮明にして、顔の色悦懌なり。香炉を持ちて来りて、大臣に謂ひて曰く、吾相府の恩をもて、邪道を免るることを得たり。今極楽に詣るなりといへり。語り了へて西に向ひて飛び去るとみたり。[254]

This may be something of an exception given Mukū's misbehavior After Kūkai's death, a struggle arose between Kōyasan and Tōji over which temple would possess the thirty volumes of text which Kūkai brought back from China and presented to the Japanese court. At this time, it was in the possession of Mukū at Kōyasan, but when Kangen 觀賢 of the Tōji, armed with an imperial decree, demanded that Mukū return it to Tōji, Mukū hid it away.

The Christian tradition is also replete with tales of the impurity and sensory foulness attending the deaths of misers and usurers; toads dropping burning coins into the mouths of their corpses, coins buried with or the corpses turning into worms, their bodies rotting so foully that many die of the stench. So, just as one may long for god's justice but revile the punishments meted out by man, longing for the riches of heaven and the pure land, as they are pure, perfect and certainly not up for sale, is perhaps of a different order. Longing for them is inextricable from the turning away from this world and its passing pleasures

[254] Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 and Ōsone Shōsuke 大曾根章介, *Ōjōden*, *Hokkegenki* 往生傳、法華驗記, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 1974 p22

which is necessary to gain them. Yet it is perhaps wrong to go too far in distinguishing between the pure beauty described by the likes of Genshin and attending the deaths of the holy people in the Legenda and *Ōjōden* and the kind of sensory wonders which can obviously be understood as the equivalent of cash. Bluntly put, one can always find conceptions of the sensory bliss of the heavenly realm in terms of what may be bought for money, as this passage from the 'Elucidarium' of Honorius Augustoduniensis (who died around 1151) shows:

> Here, that is, in this world, it is pleasurable to see many beautiful men and women, to wear fine clothes, to look at great buildings, to hear sweet singing, charming conversation, organs, lyres, citharas and the like, to smell incense and various other kinds of perfume, to enjoy food of different kinds and to spend one's time in comfort and enjoyment; and to have much property and all kinds of furniture; all these things will be available in abundance to the saints.[255]

There is ambiguity, therefore, around the renunciation of money-which is clear-and the immense fineness of heaven and the Pure Land and the purity, light, music and wonder that heralds it. Heaven in the Legenda Aurea would seem to be populated solely by clerics with shining robes and ranks preserved incorrupt, while the Pure Land also has its hierarchies marked by different amounts of luminosity. How then can we make sense of this? How can we make it as unproblematic and as it must have been for the original audience?

The trope of purity and impurity found in the Legenda Aurea and especially the *Ōjōden*

[255] Honorius Augustoduniensis, *Elucidarium* Collophon 1171-72

offers a way to understand the sometimes apparently incoherent aspects of Medieval views of this life and the next. The precise location of the dead holy person, be it the grave or in heaven, was in many ways not so important as the theme of purity associated with that location. This smoothes over some of the cracks we find in general trends and theories regarding the location of the dead when reading these two popular collections. Purity surrounding the grave site as a luminal location for expressions of the afterlife, and appropriateness of punishments and rewards seem to be the key to understanding such material. Chapter 110 of the Legenda Aurea on Saint Stephen Pope[256] who requires his grave to be cleaned, and Chapter 129 on Mamertinus where saints in tombs discuss who is pure enough to be their guest are good examples of the saints presented as in their tombs, a pure place. The need to present these saints as in heaven was by no means absolute. Similarly, the last book of the *Shui Ōjōden* chapter 11 relates the story of a holy monk who achieved birth in the Pure Land but nonetheless appears to another monk in a dream demanding his grave be cleaned out as heavenly beings visit him there and they cannot stand impurity. Alongside this rather unusual case of the praesentia of a medieval Buddhist holy man at his tomb, there is the praesentia of holy beings and their qualities, some perceptible to the senses but all relating to purity. Chapter 163 of the Legenda Aurea, entitled 'The commemoration of all souls' has a lot of interesting material on locations of fit punishments of sinners, including in a block of ice used to cool a bishop's feet[257]. Just

[256] There are many examples in the Legenda Aurea of purity of the grave site of holy people. For example, in Tale 110, that of Saint Stephen Pope, a monk goes to the heavenly court and is sent back to the world of the living. Peter entrusted the monk's soul to the hands of one who had been a monk in the aforesaid monastery, ordering him to replace it in the body. The second monk demanded, as a reward for transporting the soul, that his brother monk recite the Psalm Miserere mei Deus, and that he sweep out his tomb from time to time. So the monk came back from death and related all the things that had happened to him. It is interesting that despite being in heaven, the monk is concerned about his grave.

[257] "One time, however, he heard a human voice coming from the ice. He adjured the voice to identify itself, and it said "I am a soul punished in this refrigerant for my sins, and I could be freed if you would say thirty masses for me on thirty consecutive days without interruption"

as the location of the relics of holy people needs to be appropriately pure and sinners receive their sensory experiences appropriate to their impurity, It is also appropriate that *zuisō* and signs of the closeness to god of the saints should manifest at the deaths of saints and *ōjōnin* and about their remains.

Their real experience of the afterlife is given precedence over abstract principles, and perhaps this is why sensory experience is so significant in both traditions. In the middle ages, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on whether the term means more than a transitional period and if so whether it can be applied outside of Europe, the sheer reality of the purity and sensory splendor of heaven and the pure land could be approached in this world at the holiest of pilgrimage sites, relics, temples and cathedrals. Holy people were one of the loci for this splendor, and the moments between their life and death which we have looked at today were the time at which signs of their great purity where particularly looked, listened felt and smelt for. So we can see from a new angle the ways in which spiritual riches may interact with the more worldly riches of sensory abundance. The spiritual surely transcends the worldly, purifying and perfecting it, but the worldly surely remains part of the popular appeal and cosmological nature of the spiritual.

A key topic for future research will be the ways in which this pre-modern world-view declined. In early modern times, both in Japan and the west, there was a pervasive secularization of society as the hold of religious institutions over politics and cosmology gave way to the power of secular institutions. A key example of the changing approach in Japan would be the puppet drama *Kōchi Hōin Odenki* 弘智法印御伝記[258]. This case stands out from the other *sokushinbutsu* for which there is a lack of source material. The

[258] Dunn, Charles ダン・チャルズ Torigoe Bunzō 鳥越文蔵 Koten Bunko 古典文庫 No.224 Kojorurishū 古浄瑠璃集 Tokyo: Koten Bunko

Odenki is very much a product of its time, reflecting many of the styles and thought of the early Edo period. It includes a range of comic scenes alongside the tale of the protagonist's family achieving pure land rebirth and he himself becoming a *sokushinbutsu*. In the west, we see a comparable blend of curiosity, comedy and veneration applied to the mummies of the special dead. For example, consider this section from the Diary of Samuel Pepys:

> Tuesday 23 February 1669 Up: and to the Office, where all the morning, and then home, and put a mouthfull of victuals in my mouth; and by a hackney-coach followed my wife and the girls, who are gone by eleven o'clock, thinking to have seen a new play at the Duke of York's house. But I do find them staying at my tailor's, the play not being to-day, and therefore I now took them to Westminster Abbey, and there did show them all the tombs very finely, having one with us alone, there being other company this day to see the tombs, it being Shrove Tuesday; and here we did see, by particular favour, the body of Queen Katherine of Valois; and I had the upper part of her body in my hands, and I did kiss her mouth, reflecting upon it that I did kiss a Queen, and that this was my birth-day, thirty-six years old, that I did first kiss a Queen. But here this man, who seems to understand well, tells me that the saying is not true that says she was never buried, for she was buried; only, when Henry the Seventh built his chapel, it was taken up and laid in this wooden coffin; but I did there see that, in it, the body was buried in a leaden one, which remains under the body to this day[259].

[259] Latham, R and Matthews, W The Diaries of Samuel Pepys Vol. IX 1668-9 London: HarperCollins p456-457

This will be a key aspect of my ongoing study.

Concluding remarks

This thesis has employed a contructivist approach to its subject matter. In practice, this has entailed the use of a number of different approaches, in conjunction, in order to construct a new perspective on the bodily incorruptibility of holy men and women in pre-modern Japan and Europe. The legend of the eternal meditation of Kūkai has been a particular focus of this project, due to its fundamental significance to the subject of this thesis in its Japanese instantiations. The application of form and redaction criticism to the legend is a valuable addition to the content and source critical approaches that make up the bulk of previous research on that legend. Without the application of these methods, the similarity in content between the early forms of the legend and other hagiographic forms of the time might seem rather incidental. Setting aside sect-based theoretical boundaries has allowed for intellectual historical insight into the shared Sitz im Leben, setting in life, that informed and inspired much of Japanese Buddhist thought in the 10th and 11th centuries. This is a key example of the ways in which the application of theoretical variety may yield valuable results in the field of Intellectual History.

This final chapter has also applied a form critical approach, showing the ways in which a form which was originally typified by a single hortatory focus and tertium comparitionis relating to the doctrine of the resurrection came to develop within a deepening cosmology and concept of the individual. The content analysis in the final section has explored a number of themes within the framework of intellectually active medieval society in Japan and Christian Europe. The concepts of rich and poor, pure and impure, holy and unholy can, it would seem, be to have been understood in terms of a continuous, hierarchical scale. That is to say, when we examine the popular hagiographic materials that have been the main focus of these sections, we see that the differences between heavenly beauty and

earthly nobility are for all intents and purposes differences of degree rather than of essence. At the heart of this understanding, I would argue, especially in the western context, is a primacy of the physical and the corporeal over the spiritual and immaterial. The ways in which the social hierarchies which typify medieval societies fit in within a wider cosmological hierarchy would seem to be generally applicable to the point that this aspect of the intellectual history of the period in both Japan and Europe may serve to bolster arguments for the applicability of the term "a medieval society", used in a common sense, to both societies.

In terms of this study, all the above factors are understood as aspects of the reception theory of the image of bodily incorruptibility. As laid out in the first chapter of this thesis, bodily incorruptibility is in the first instance and the final analysis a visual phenomenon. Its actual instantiation is the root and cause of all theoretical structures relating to it. This fact in itself is reason enough to study the phenomenon without regard to the sectarian, cultural and national boundaries that apply to its theoretical understanding within religion and elsewhere. Archetypal images, such as Mahakasyapa or Kūkai in the Buddhist tradition or the resurrection body of Lazarus or the seven sleepers in Christianity, are at the heart of their traditions. Though doctrinal and institutional factors are bound up with subsequent instantiations of the incorruptible bodies of holy men and women, in a key sense, these sub-instantiations are in the manner of copies. This is not to say that a copy is necessarily of less worth than an original, particularly when the original is in a poor state of preservation, but it is to say that subsequent instantiations are dependent upon the original for their existence and interpretation. In many ways and in a number of instances taken up in this thesis, cases of bodily incorruptibility are directly associated with or comparable to the worship of special religious statuary. The living statue and the

undecayed body are of a similar nature, and perform similar functions. The function is determined by those who care for and revere the image. The intentions of an artist or the person whose preserved body is revered are entirely secondary in this regard. The purposeful application of their doctrinal principles is, even if it is taken into regard to any extent, dependent upon the relationship of receivers with the image. The social structuring of this relationship requires leaders, and the aims and doctrinal interests of these leaders (Ninkai in the case of Kūkai, Genshin in the case of the Shakakō) are more relevant than the aims and doctrinal interests of the originators of the image itself. Perhaps where a strong link to the originator has been associated with the production of copies, then an obvious reflexivity is produced, albeit not by the originator but by the receivers. This is the case with Hockney's faxes, or in the emulation of the Kūkai incorruptible meditation image by the sokushinbutsu monks of Dewasanzan.

At its heart, then, this thesis has been a contribution to a now growing field of material culture and the physical instantiation (not merely "representation") of sacrality. This is a field in which the relationship between text and image is valued. I hope that this project, though a constructivist work which actively avoids conclusions and finality, may contribute to ongoing scholarship focusing on the development of these key images in Japanese and European religions.

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